THURSDAY
April 16, 2026

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
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INTENSE EXPLOSION

Five killed, 15 injured in blast at house in A.P.

SOUTH » PAGE 9

NEW CHAPTER

Samrat sworn in as Bihar's first BJP CM

NEWS » PAGE 12

MOVING UP

93.7% students clear CBSE Class 10 exam

NEWS » PAGE 14

'FLAWED PROPOSALS'

On delimitation and women's reservation

The proposed Bills have significant impact

EDITORIAL & OPINION » PAGES 10 & 11

WORLD CROWN BECKONS

Vaishali wins women's Candidates title

SPORT » PAGE 17

States' seats will rise 50% after delimitation: Centre

No State will lose current proportional strength in Parliament, says govt. functionary; while not mentioned in the draft Bills, Home Minister has assured party representatives of rise, official adds

Varghese K. George
NEW DELHI

All States will have their number of Lok Sabha seats increase by half after delimitation, and no State will lose its current proportional strength in Parliament, a senior government functionary told *The Hindu* on Wednesday.

He said Union Home Minister Amit Shah would clarify this in Parliament during the debate on the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill and the Delimitation Bill. The debate begins on Thursday.

"If there is any requirement for change in the language of the draft Bill, that too will be addressed," the government functionary said.

Mr. Shah had assured party representatives that the strength of the Lok Sabha would increase by 50%, to be distributed across States in their existing proportions – that is, a 50% increase in the number of Lok Sabha seats from each individual State.

However, this is not mentioned in the drafts of the Bills circulated by the government. In fact, the Bills propose an inter-State redistribution of Lok Sabha seats, which could make it impossible for current proportionate shares to be maintained.

The senior functionary said this was a misreading of the drafts. "Those who are reading bits and pieces and interpreting them as reducing the relative strength of the South are missing the big picture," the functionary said.

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RELATED REPORTS ON » PAGE 12

INDIA bloc leaders after a meeting to discuss the proposed Bills on delimitation in New Delhi on Wednesday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

'INDIA bloc will vote against delimitation'

NEW DELHI
The Opposition INDIA bloc have decided to vote against the delimitation provisions in the proposed Bills, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said on Tuesday while underlining that the bloc's opposition was not against women's quota. » PAGE 12

NEARBY

Modi proposes collective pledge for citizens

MYSURU
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday called for collective the adoption of a set of nine behavioural commitments by the citizens in the country's march towards progress. » PAGE 6

Abdul Jabbar suspended from Congress

BENGALURU
A day after Chief Minister's Political Secretary Naseer Ahmed was sacked on alleged anti-party activities, the Congress suspended K. Abdul Jabbar, a three-time MLC, from the party's primary membership with immediate effect. » PAGE 8

Iran says ceasefire is at risk, threatens to close Red Sea traffic

Agence France-Presse
TEHRAN

Iran's military threatened on Wednesday to shut down Red Sea trade unless the U.S. lifted its naval blockade on Tehran's ports, saying the ceasefire was at risk.

The head of Iran's military central command centre said a U.S. failure to lift the blockade would constitute "a prelude" to violating the two-week ceasefire. Unless the U.S. relents, Iran's armed forces "will not allow any exports or imports to continue in the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman, and the Red Sea," Iranian General Ali Abdollahi said.

The warning came after U.S. President Donald Trump indicated peace negotiations could resume this week, while Iran confirmed the sides had kept talking via Pakistan after a first round of negotiations fell flat. Iran on Wednesday welcomed a Pakistani delegation led by its Army chief Asim Munir.

Pakistan's Army chief Asim Munir with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in Tehran on Wednesday. AP

Islamabad "has held discussions with the Americans and has also heard our stances. During this visit the views of both sides are to be discussed in detail," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12
LEADERS FLOCK TO CHINA » PAGE 16

Congress MLA Vinay Kulkarni convicted in murder case

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A special court in Bengaluru on Wednesday convicted Congress MLA Vinay Kulkarni and 16 others for the 2016 murder of BJP leader Yogeshgouda Goudar.

Kulkarni has been convicted for criminal conspiracy and murder but acquitted under the Arms Act due to lack of sanction for prosecution.

Yogeshgouda, a member of Zilla panchayat, was hacked to death at his gym after chilli powder was thrown in his face. Kulkarni, then a district in-charge minister, was named the main conspirator by the CBI, which took over the probe in 2019. The court also ordered perjury proceedings against three police officers.

FULL REPORT ON » PAGE 8

HC directs government to 'strictly and faithfully' implement menstrual leave policy

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Wednesday (April 15, 2026) directed the State Government to "strictly and faithfully" implement the menstrual leave (ML) policy, which mandates registered establishments to grant one day's leave per month to women employees, aged between 18 and 52 years, during their menstrual cycle till the proposed law on ML is enacted.

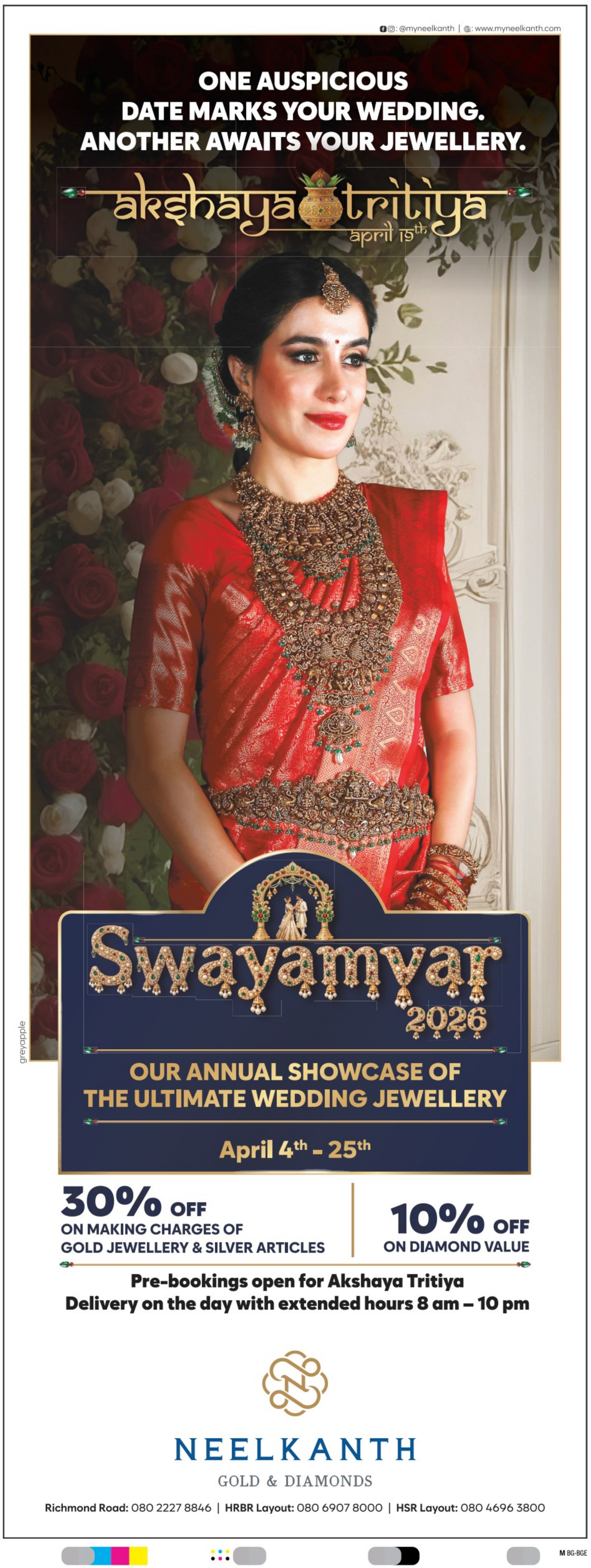
In the interregnum, the Court said, it shall be incumbent upon the State to ensure effective operationalisation of the policy through the issuance of suitable guidelines, circulars, and administrative instructions to secure its uniform, consistent and rigorous implementation across all sectors, including the unorganised sectors.

Justice M. Nagaprasanna passed the order on a petition filed by 41-year-old Chandravva Hanumant Gokavi, who works in a hotel in Mudalgi of Gokak taluk in Belagavi district before the Dharwad bench of the Court.

No undue delay

Upon enactment of the proposed law – Karnataka Menstrual Leave and Hygiene Bill, 2025, the State shall, without any undue delay frame appropriate rules to give full and meaningful effect of the mandate, the Court said.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 7



K. MURALI KUMAR, AP, NAGARA GOPAL

First impressions and the lasting impact

It is up to Mukul Choudhary, Praful, Sakib and the others waiting to press their claims to build on these early gains if their ambitions are to snowball towards their logical end

R. Kaushik

GR Vishwanath, the wonderfully wristy stylist from Bengaluru, wasn't the first Indian batter to make a century on Test debut. Nor was the second. Or even the third.

But he was the first Indian debutant centurion to score a second Test ton. And then a third, and a fourth, ending up with 14 hundreds when he played the last of his 91 Tests in February 1983. Remarkably, 'Vishy' never announced his retirement from the five-day game; dropped after a forgettable tour of Pakistan, he played First Class cricket for five more seasons before riding away into the sunset.

Before him, Lala Amarnath, Deepak Shodhan, AG Kripal Singh, Abbas Ali Baig and Hanumant Singh all announced their arrival in international cricket with three-figure knocks. Not one of these five gentlemen would make a second hundred. Vishy, who celebrated his Test debut against Australia in Kanpur in November 1969 by erasing the bitter disappointment of a first-innings duck with 137 of the finest in the second innings, finally broke the jinx in February 1973.

Breaking the hoodoo

It took Vishy three and a half years and 25 innings to 'get the monkey off the back', as he recalls in his 2022 autobiography *Wrist Assured*. "I was beginning to think it was one of those things that happened for no reason," he writes of the no-second-hundred syndrome. "So, when I did touch three-figures in Bombay (as it was then), I was a relieved man. Subconsciously, I had started to believe that I would never replicate my feat in Kanpur. I wasn't desperate for a hundred, no, but I was still looking to get over 'the hoodoo', as it was called in Indian cricket circles. It was a milestone moment not just for me, but for Indian batting as a whole."

After Vishy, 11 more Indians have uncorked statement-making debut Test tons. Mohammed Azharuddin scored hundreds in his first three Tests, while fellow future captains Sourav Ganguly and Rohit Sharma slammed centuries in each of their first two matches. The last Indian to produce a ton on his maiden appearance was Yashasvi Jaiswal in July 2023; the prolific left-hander now has seven hundreds in 28 Tests.

To deliver the goods on one's maiden appearance in any sport at the highest level must be an indescribably fulfilling feeling with multiple ramifications. For one thing, it will explode the inevitable gremlins of self-doubt, of insecurity and a certain diffidence, of the inescapable if somewhat irrational consideration of whether one belongs. Especially in a team sport, it will buy the individual a little bit of time to grow into their role. It will also raise the level of expectations, especially from an Indian context and more specifically from the context of Indian cricket because expectations and Indian cricketers have been inseparable bedfellows from the time Kapil Dev's intrepid warriors turned the world order upside down with their spectacular triumph at the 1983 World Cup.

It isn't just individuals that are nervous about their debuts. It won't be fanciful to suggest that apprehension was among the primary emotions the founding fathers entertained when the Indian Premier League kicked off at Bengaluru's M Chinnaswamy Stadium nearly 18 years back to the day. On 18 April 2008, Rahul Dravid's Royal Challengers Bangalore (as they were then called) locked horns with Ganguly's Kolkata Knight Riders. Less than six months previously, Dravid had stepped down as India's captain after leading the side for two years, having taken over from Ganguly who was sacked after five and a half years at the helm.

There was an understandable buzz about the IPL, conceptualised by Lalit Modi and given shape, even if belatedly, by the other visionaries in the Board of Control for Cricket in India. The IPL was projected as a mix of cricket and entertainment, with 'When opportunity meets talent' as its USP. The inaugural edition included the best players in the world in a format of which Indians had little taste. Or experience.

Of course, India's unexpected march to the title at the inaugural T20 World Cup in South Africa less than a half-year previously was just the shot in the arm the IPL needed. Until the World Cup, India had played exactly one Twenty20 International, against South Africa in Johannesburg in December 2006. With Dinesh Karthik in the forefront, India won a tense affair by six wickets, taking 19.5 overs to reel in the Proteas' modest 126 for nine. Virender Sehwag was the captain, it was Sachin Tendulkar's only T20I and there was no Dravid, Ganguly or Yuvraj Singh. Few remembered the game at the start of the World Cup, fewer still remember it now, but India's debut as a T20I side will remain memorable for the right reasons.

Just how much significance the Indian board attached to the T20 World Cup was evidenced from the grand launch of the IPL in Mumbai on 13 September 2007, even as first-time, left-field skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni was masterminding a stunning coup in the land of the Big Five. It was, however, the World Cup success story that would headline the narrative in the lead-up to the start of the Indian Premier League.

A full house at the Chinnaswamy didn't know what to expect or what was in store even as it partook of a glitzy opening ceremony marked by the promised entertainment and a fireworks display that left several in the stands with minor burns. One half of the bargain had been fulfilled. Now, it was over to the cricket.

For all its dalliances with glamour and Bollywood and afterparties in the initial few years, the IPL became a product to cherish and savour owing to the quality of the cricket. It was imperative for cricket to remain at the front and centre and no one understood it better, for want of a better phrase, than Brendon McCullum, the former New Zealand captain who is now under immense scrutiny in his role as England's all-format coach after his famed 'Bazball' approach hasn't managed to bring entertainment and success together.

But on 18 April 2008, McCullum was both entertaining and successful. Immensely so, providing the IPL with just the fillip it required in its very first match.

Magical knock

After Dravid chose to field, McCullum tore into the RCB bowling with a ferocity seldom witnessed at the Chinnaswamy. Numerous Test hundreds and double-centuries had been uncorked, but this mayhem was something else. One had to be present at the venue to grasp the full force of McCullum's pyrotechnics. The fours flowed regularly, 10 of them, but they were eclipsed by the sixes (13). In a matter of 73 balls, McCullum had taken the IPL to a stratospheric level with a subliminal unbeaten 158. Against Zaheer Khan and Praveen Kumar and Jacques Kallis and Sunil Joshi. The legend of the IPL had taken shape, entirely because of the magical luminescence of one man's ability.

In the years that followed, the IPL has grown from strength to strength. There have been seismic controversies, sure, but the tournament has been resilient enough to meet, tackle and overcome these challenges and set up shop as the unmatched No. 1 when it comes to franchise-based T20 leagues. And it continues to facilitate talent meeting opportunity.

Take Mukul Choudhary, for instance, in his debut season. And Praful Hinge and Sakib Hussain too, for that matter. Choudhary is a 21-year-old from Rajasthan, bought before this season by Lucknow Super Giants for ₹2.6 crore on the back of his exploits for his state in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. His first two IPL games were largely uneventful - 14 in a losing cause against Delhi Capitals, 2 not out off five balls and the best seat at the non-striker's end as his captain, Rishabh Pant, smashed three boundaries in five balls in the last over in a dramatic win over Sunrisers Hyderabad. Then came Eden Gardens and Choudhary's chance to make himself a household name. He came in at 104 for five, which soon became 128 for seven; his team needed a further 54 for victory against KKR, and Choudhary had only his bowlers for support. Fear not, he seemed to say, during a furious onslaught that left the audiences in shock and awe. The 54 were knocked off in 24 deliveries; Avesh Khan faced just three of those as Choudhary went on a six-hitting rampage with Vaibhav Arora, Kartik Tyagi and Cameron Green at the receiving end. 54 not out off 27, two fours and seven sixes, made Choudhary a marked man, one to be watched and followed and scrutinised, especially with head coach Justin Langer promising to make him the best No. 6 or 7 to play T20s for India. Wow.

And what about Hinge and Sakib? Sunrisers Hyderabad, the 2016 champions, had made a poor start to their 2026 campaign with three defeats in their first four matches when they decided to shake things up. Out went IPL veterans Harshal Patel and Jaydev Unadkat for the showdown against Rajasthan Royals, boasting the precocious, precious 15-year-old Vaibhav Suryavanshi and a four-on-four unbeaten record. In came debutants Hinge and Sakib. Lambs to the slaughter, you say?

Yes, but not in the way it was perceived initially.

Dream debut

Skipper Ishan Kishan's enterprising 91 had lifted SRH to 216 for six in front of their loyal Orange Army, who brought the roof down in the first over of the RR chase. Within no time, Hinge packed off Suryavanshi, Dhruv Jurel and Lhuan-dre Pretorius, all for ducks, to leave RR reeling at 1 for 3. In the next over, Sakib had Jaiswal caught at third man, and Hinge returned in the third to pack off Riyan Parag, the rival skipper. 9 for 5, game over, sealed nicely in a lovely box with a ribbon on top. Hinge finished with four for 34, Sakib struck in his subsequent spells too to end up with even more impressive figures of four for 24. The former, from Vidarbha, is 24, the latter from Bihar is 21, both having honed their skills at the MRF Pace Foundation under Glenn McGrath. Like the IPL itself in 2008, they couldn't have hoped for anything more meaningful or substantial on their respective debuts. Like Choudhary, they are also surrounded by experienced, well-intentioned, well-meaning support groups who know what it takes to keep meteors grounded. It's up to them, Hinge and Sakib and Choudhary and the others waiting to press their claims, to build on these early gains if their ambitions are to snowball towards their logical end.

THE GIST

- To deliver the goods on one's maiden appearance in any sport at the highest level must be an indescribably fulfilling feeling with multiple ramifications
- For all its dalliances with glamour and Bollywood and afterparties in the initial few years, the IPL became a product to cherish and savour owing to the quality of the cricket
- In the years that followed, the IPL has grown from strength to strength. There have been seismic controversies, sure, but the tournament has been resilient enough to meet, tackle and overcome these challenges

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Mukhyamantri Kanya Sumangala Yojana: 26.81 lakh girls supported at birth stage

Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojana: 1.05 lakh children benefited under the Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojana (COVID & General)

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao: 285 lakhs sensitised, 3.47 lakh activities

Anganwadi centers: 1.90 lakh centers, 35.46 lakh children fed hot cooked meals

Mission Vatsalya Scheme: Over 1 lakh children in the state have been reunited with their parents/guardians under the scheme.

Strengthening Nutrition Monitoring at Anganwadi Centres: Four types of growth monitoring devices and mobile phones have been provided to all Anganwadi centres to identify malnutrition and monitor nutritional status.

Mission Shakti & Women Power Line: Safety at Every Step

During the schooling years, the state has made safety and dignity fundamental rights rather than privileges. Under Mission Shakti, 40,000 police personnel have been trained, and dedicated centres have been established in every police station.

1090 Women Power Line	**1098** Child Helpline	**181** Women Helpline
102 Ambulance Helpline (Pregnancy & Infants)	**112** Police emergency service	**108** Ambulance Service

Crime reduction (Sept–Dec 2025)

- Rape cases declined by **33.92%**
- Kidnapping of women and children reduced by **17.03%**
- Dowry deaths fell by **12.96%**
- Domestic violence cases dropped by **9.54%**

Indicating improved reporting, response, and deterrence

Uttar Pradesh now ranks first in the country on the ITSSO portal with a 98.90% disposal rate of cases related to women and child crimes, and a mere 0.20% pendency. Inside school premises, 2,346 schools have been equipped with incinerators and sanitary-pad vending machines, ensuring menstrual hygiene and dignity for adolescent girls. Self-defence training has been given in 1,527 schools, arming students with the confidence to protect themselves.

From Anganwadi To Entrepreneurship: Women's Economic Rise

Uttar Pradesh is expanding women's economic opportunities through financial inclusion and workforce participation. With initiatives like the Women Economic Empowerment Index and Lakhpati Didi, women are gaining access to skills, entrepreneurship, and sustainable livelihoods.

BC Sakhis: Financial transactions > ₹42,711 crore, dividends > ₹116 crore

Vidyut Sakhis: ₹3,207 crore collected, commission ₹41.3 crore

PM SVANidhi: 2 lakh+ women benefiting

Women's labour force participation: 13% (2017) → 36% (today)

SHGs under UP Gramin Aajeevika: 9.43 lakh women groups, 10.6 crore women reached

Lakhpati Didi: 35 lakh identified, 18.55 lakh achieved "Lakhpati"

Women's labour force participation has increased from 13% (2017) to **36%**

From Marriage To Motherhood To Old Age: Lifetime Security

Marriage & Family:

Ensuring dignity and financial support at the start of family life

- **Mukhyamantri Samuhik Vivah Yojana:** 50 lakh daughters' marriages solemnised
- **Online portal** for transparency and documentation
- **OBC Marriage Grant Scheme:** 6.48 lakh beneficiaries supported
- **₹1,295.72 crore** provided as financial assistance

Motherhood & Health:

Strengthening maternal health and nutrition systems

- **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana:** 60 lakh mothers
- **Janani Suraksha Yojana** ₹1,400 rural / ₹1,000 urban per institutional delivery
- A network of **1.90+** lakh Anganwadi centres serves **2.12 crore** beneficiaries, including children, pregnant women, and lactating mothers

Pension Schemes:

Providing financial security and social protection

- **Fivefold pension hike (2017→ 2026):** ₹300→ ₹1,500 per month from April 2026
- **Destitute women:** 38.58 lakh beneficiaries
- **Elderly:** 67.50 lakh beneficiaries
- **Divyangjan:** 11.57 lakh beneficiaries
- **Rani Lakshmibai Women and Child Honour Fund** - 14,559 victims, ₹511.20 crore

A Full-Life Cycle of Support for Women in Uttar Pradesh

BIRTH
Kanya Sumangala + Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao

SCHOOL
Career guidance, self-defence training and access to sanitary pads

WORK
Lakhpati Didi, Women Economic Empowerment Index, night-shift-work permission

MARRIAGE
Mukhyamantri Samuhik Vivah Yojana

MOTHERHOOD
Janani Suraksha, PM Matru Vandana, Anganwadi centers

OLD AGE
Fivefold pension hike, Rani Lakshmibai Women and Child Honour Fund

Empowered Women - Prosperous Society: Building a New Uttar Pradesh

From birth to old age, the Government of Uttar Pradesh supports every woman, ensuring safety, dignity, and self-reliance at every stage of life.

Government of Uttar Pradesh: Committed to Empowering Women and Driving Progress

J BG-BGE

Scorching summer cuts into hours, earnings of city's outdoor workers

Several, including traffic personnel, point out the lack of shaded areas or proper footpaths where they can rest even briefly

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

From fruit sellers and labourers to traffic police and street vendors, those working outdoors say they are enduring increasingly harsh conditions as summer intensifies. SUDHAKARA JAIN, ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Apart from a 20-minute lunch break, Sreedhar K., 47, remains at his spot outside Vidhana Soudha, where he has been photographing visitors for years. Footfall drops during the peak afternoon heat, but stepping away, he risks losing even the few visitors who continue to come, he said.

A few metres away, opposite the legislature complex, Gayathri Ramesh, who runs a fruit cart, said the summer has made it difficult to manage her health, leaving her with little opportunity to take breaks while working.

Harsh conditions

Across the city, from fruit sellers and labourers to traffic police and street vendors, those working outdoors say they are enduring increasingly harsh conditions as summer intensifies. This week, Bengaluru recorded a maximum temperature of over 36 degrees Celsius, 3 degrees above normal for the month of April, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The weather body has also predicted that similar hot and humid weather will persist for the next seven days. For many who work outdoors from morning to evening, even access to drinking water remains a challenge. Workers say they ration what they carry; some drink less to make it last the day, while women, in particular, avoid drinking water to reduce the need to find washrooms only to end up getting severely dehydrated. Several, including traffic personnel, point out the lack of shaded areas or proper footpaths where they can rest.

As Sreedhar continued to scan the area for customers, he gestured towards a two-litre soft drink bottle that he uses to hold water. "It turns hot within 20 minutes. There's nowhere nearby to refill, you have to walk at least 200 metres," he said, wiping sweat from his face. He adds that there is no shade along the one-kilometre stretch, leaving the footpath as the only place to sit. Ms. Gayathri said the heat has made both work and health harder to manage. "I have diabetes. This weather makes me feel weak and dizzy," she said. Pointing to the area around her cart, she said, "There's no shade here. People come out of the metro and

wait for autos and buses, but there's nowhere to stand." She adds that she often walks to a shed near the Vidhana Soudha Metro Station just to sit and eat for a few minutes.

At construction sites, women workers say the summer heat is cutting into their working hours and, in turn, their daily wages. Many said they now start earlier and leave before the afternoon heat peaks, while men often continue longer. Geeta, a worker in HBR Layout, said this directly affects how much they take home. "In these months, we earn less because we can't work a full day," she said, adding that workers shift between sites depending on conditions, with some areas slightly more bearable than others. Recalling work in Mahadevapura last summer, she said access to water was poor and the heat made conditions all the more difficult.

Lost workdays

For Gangamma, a waste collector and the sole earner in her family, the impact shows up in lost workdays. She starts at 5 a.m., collecting plastic and scrap, but said she had to stop working several days since March due to dehydration and vomiting because of mercury rising. On most days, she earns around ₹200, which she said she loses entirely when she is unwell.

On High Grounds Road, traffic constable Ashok K.S. stands at a junction throughout the day. Although a nearby checkpost, shared by four personnel, provides some shelter, they cannot rely on it frequently. "We can't keep going. The uniform makes the heat harder to bear," he said, pointing out that while there has been talk of improving facilities, there has been little change.

Little relief

Inside K.R. Market, Roza Afra stated that she keeps watering her rug while tying jasmine strands. But even that offers little relief from the heat, she said. "By 11 a.m., the ground becomes too hot, but there are no alternatives nearby. The flowers spoil faster in the heat, affecting sales," she said. Vendors across K.R. market said that they rely on water ATMs, but they are currently not working in the area. Toilets in the area – about three – are usually locked or only opened occasionally, making it difficult to access basic facilities, they said.

High ecological value tree-planting less popular with farmers, says study

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The study examines how smallholder farmers in Karnataka make decisions about planting trees on their land FILE PHOTO

A global team of scientists in a new study conducted near Nagarahole and Bandipur Tiger Reserve has revealed that while there is strong interest in planting trees, farmers tend to prefer planting methods that maximise private benefits, such as planting timber trees along farm boundaries.

The study titled 'Guiding private afforestation to raise public goods provision: Understanding farmers' multi-dimensional preferences for trees in India', published in *Ecological Economics*, found that tree-planting designs that offer greater biodiversity and carbon benefits are less preferred and often require financial incentives to encourage adoption.

This study, authored by Danny Tobin, Alexander Pfaff and Jeffrey R. Vincent from Duke University; Anubhav Vanamamalai from Columbia University; and Krithi K. Karanth from Duke University and the Centre for Wildlife Studies, examines how smallholder farmers in Karnataka make decisions about planting trees on their land.

Nature-based solution

The Centre for Wildlife Studies said that while tree planting is widely promoted as a nature-based solution to address climate change, biodiversity loss, and rural livelihoods, many programmes fall short of delivering these benefits, often because trees do not survive or are planted in ways that limit their ecological value.

"This study shows how initiatives to plant trees on private lands, led by civil society and public actors, can improve their designs by interacting with the landholders, such as farmers. Designs can better address local needs when we better understand farmers' diverse preferences. Targeting key distinct groups, and allowing each farmer to choose what and where to plant, can raise the adoption of biodiverse options and lower programme costs of compensating farmers for providing public goods," Mr. Tobin, lead author of the paper said.

The study highlights a key challenge for afforestation initiatives: balancing public environmental goals with the economic realities faced by farmers. Importantly, the scientists found that farmers' willingness to adopt more ecologically beneficial tree-planting approaches varies widely.

Adoption

While some farmers require substantial compensation, others are willing to adopt such practices with little or no financial support. Mr. Karanth, co-author of the study said, "The widespread expansion of tree planting programmes must be undertaken with farmer consultations paired with rigorous evaluation and monitoring if tree planting programmes are to succeed. Our study offers pathways to involve local farmers' active participation from inception to implementation."

Fan frenzy

Match day: Cricket fans during the IPL 2026 match between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Lucknow Super Giants at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru on Wednesday. K. MURALI KUMAR

Auto LPG shortage returns; drivers face long queues across city

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Drivers also reported overnight queues at fuel stations in Shivajinagar and the Central Business District, highlighting the severity of the shortage. SUDHAKARA JAIN

After a brief period of relief, the shortage of auto LPG has resurfaced in Bengaluru, leaving autorickshaw drivers struggling to access fuel. Several fuel stations across the city have reported depleted stocks, forcing drivers to wait for hours in long queues.

According to drivers, the situation had improved slightly following recent protests, but has deteriorated again over the past two days. Many said most fuel stations are either out of stock or are receiving very limited supplies. V. Sridhar, an autorickshaw driver from J.P. Nagar, said the crisis has once again affected livelihoods. "We had some relief after the protest, but now it feels like we are back to square one. For the past two days, I have been spending more time waiting in queues than actually ferrying passengers. If this continues, it will become very difficult for us to earn a living," he said.

In areas such as Arakere, long queues stretching up to nearly 2 km were witnessed on Wednesday, as per drivers.

Drivers also reported overnight queues at fuel stations in Shivajinagar and Central Business District, highlighting the severity of the shortage. The recurring disruption in LPG supply has raised concerns among autorickshaw drivers, who depend on timely fuel availability to sustain their daily income.

"With no clear indication of when normal supply will resume, we urge authorities to address the issue at the earliest and ensure a steady distribution of auto LPG across the city," said T.M. Rudramurthy, general secretary of the Auto Rickshaw Drivers' Union in Bengaluru.

CBSE results: With 98.91% results, Bengaluru region stands third

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

With a pass percentage of 98.91%, Bengaluru region (Karnataka) managed to retain the third position among regions in the Class 10 exam-1 of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). It held the same position in 2025 too.

In the results declared on Wednesday, Trivandrum and Vijayawada regions stood first, with a pass percentage of 99.79% each, while Chennai region stood second with 98.58% of result.

Girls on top

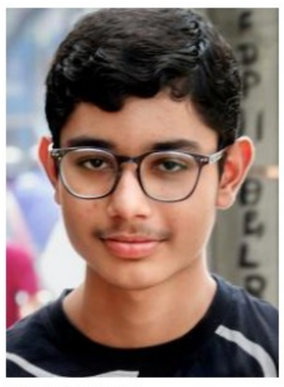
From Bengaluru region a total of 1,01,660 students appeared, of which 1,00,554 managed to pass. Girls outperformed boys with a 99.43% pass as against the 98.5% achieved by boys. Of the 54,963 boys registered for exams, 54,864 appeared and 54,023 managed to clear. The number of girls registered was 46,843 of which 46,796 appeared and 46,531 cleared.

Kalvi Jayeetha

Swanti Goel

R.Kanishka

Krishang Tekariwal



Animesh Gupta .

Across India, there is a slight improvement in pass percentage by 0.04 points, compared to the previous year. The Board stated that the results of 2025-26 academic year are "proof that students are well prepared for competency-based assessment".

From this batch, CBSE has introduced two exams for class 10 students. This has helped CBSE to announce the results early. Last year, the results were announced during the first week of May. However, this year, the session-2 of the examination is scheduled in May. Students were required to appear in at least three subjects during the first examination, which serves as the main examination.

Around 9% of the students – that is, 2,21,574 of them – got 90% and above. As many as 2.2% (55,368 students) received more than 95%.

No merit list

CBSE reiterated that there will be no merit list or first, second or third divisions. Instead, it will issue the merit certificate to the top 0.1% of students who have scored the highest marks in the subjects.

Bengaluru schools students have performed well and many schools have achieved 100% results and many students have secured over 99 per cent marks.

Toppers speak

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Kalvi Jayeetha, a student of Sri Chaitanya Techno School, Bannerghatta, who got 99.8%, said her school used to conduct exams every week, which helped with preparation. "I used previous year papers as well. All this was sufficient for me and I didn't join any coaching," she said.

She plans to opt for Science stream in PU and aspires to become an engineer.

Swanti Goel, topper of NPS, Indiranagar, scored

Across India, there is a slight improvement in pass percentage by 0.04 points, compared to the previous year

99.4%. She said she followed a very strict schedule, maintained consistency and ate healthy throughout her preparation, which helped her ace the exams. She said she found Math the easiest and struggled a bit with Social Studies, she said.

"Whenever I used to stress about my studies, my father would say do your work and do not worry about the result, which helped," she said.

R. Kanishka and Krishang Tekariwal, toppers of Delhi Public School-East Bengaluru, scored 99.2%. Both of them mentioned they studied well from the beginning of the grade. Both their parents are software engineers. Kanishka plans to appear for NEET, whereas Krishang plans to pursue PCM + Computer Science and appear for JEE.

They mentioned that their school has been really helpful throughout the year. Kanishka prepared for boards on her own and Krishang took the Allen coaching programme.

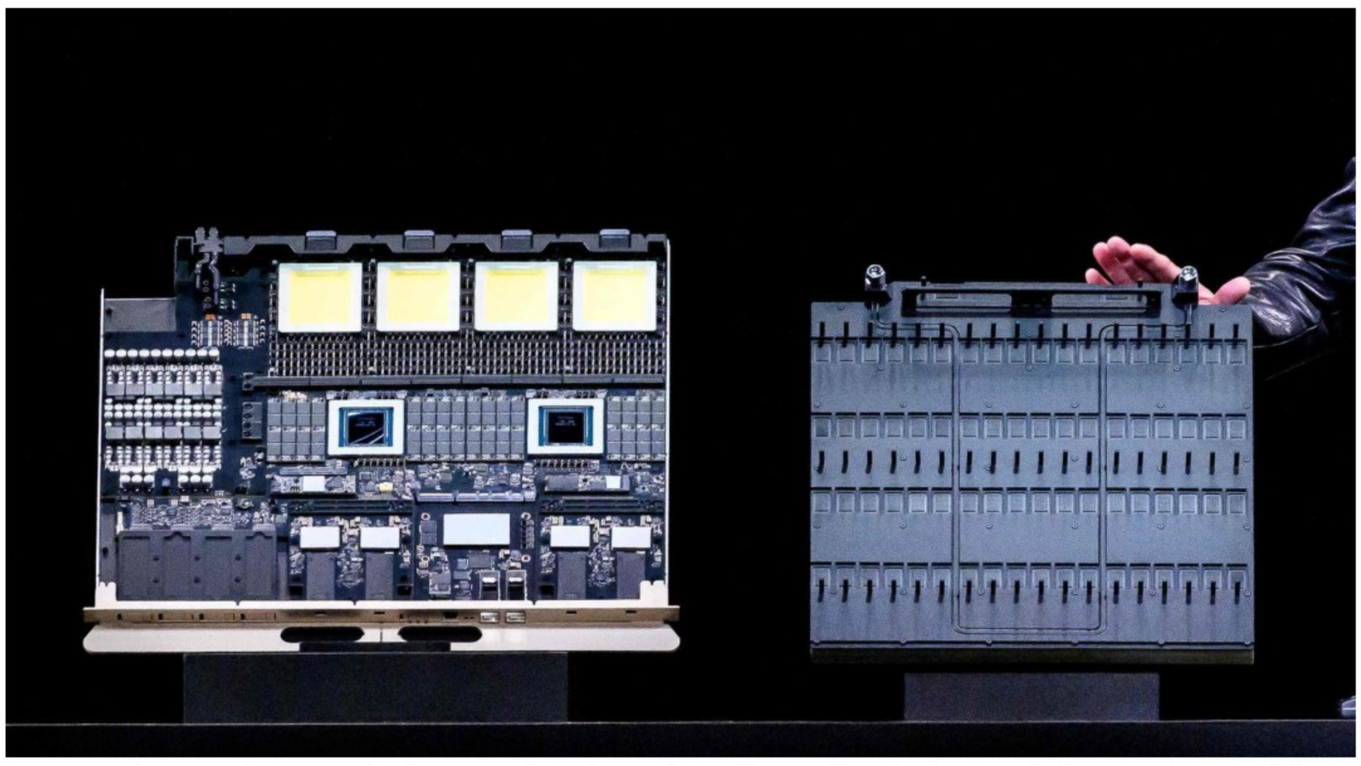
Animesh Gupta, topper of NPS Rajajinagar, scored 99.2%, plans to opt for PCMB. He wishes to appear for both JEE and NEET after 12th.

He prepared for boards on his own, with only the help of school teachers and the exam curriculum. His grandfather, a retired ISRO scientist, helped him understand the concepts well.

New brain-inspired 'memristors' promise to reduce AI energy use

Scientists at Cambridge University have found that hafnium-based films can reliably behave like synapses and with a low energy demand; hafnium oxide is already widely used in advanced CMOS transistors, which means chip manufacturers know how to deposit and integrate it at scale

Shamim Haque Mondal



In conventional computers that run AI models, the memory is located in one place and the GPUs (shown here) are in another location. So for every calculation, data needs to be transported between them. If the AI model is large, this movement of data can dominate total energy use. AFP

Researchers from the University of Cambridge have reported a new kind of brain-inspired nanodevice, a hafnium-oxide memristor, that could dramatically cut artificial intelligence's (AI) energy bill by bringing memory and computation into the same component.

The findings were published in *Science Advances* on March 20.

Most of today's computers have the von Neumann architecture: the memory, e.g. its DRAM, is located in one place and its processors – which are usually GPUs when the workload is to run AI models – are in another location. So for every calculation, data needs to be transported between the DRAM and the GPUs.

In modern computing setups that handle large AI models, this movement of data, rather than the calculations themselves, can dominate total energy use, especially when information must travel on and off chips or across multiple servers. Loading a single byte of data from off-chip memory can cost much more energy than adding two numbers the moment they arrive, in the same location.

The human brain takes a different approach. Every synapse – the junctions where neurons communicate – both stores and processes information locally, which means memory and processing are fused inside the same biological hardware. This is one reason the human brain can run roughly 10^{14} synaptic operations per second on about 20 W of power (less than a dim household light bulb), but an AI model running in a data centre will need at least hundreds to thousands of times more power for the same number of operations.

The field of neuromorphic computing aims to recreate this architecture by building electronic devices that act more like synapses and neurons than like traditional transistors and RAM chips.

Resistor with memory

The Cambridge team, which has also been working on neuromorphic computing, reported that its new memristor can also store and process data in the same place. By avoiding having to transport data, the chip cut energy use by more than 70%, the researchers estimated. The term 'memristor' is a combination of 'memory' and 'resistor'. A resistor is a small device that applies a fixed amount of resistance to a current passed through it. (If you took science in high school, you must have seen one in your lab: a small, bean-shaped piece with bands of colours and two pins at the ends.) Unlike a resistor, a memristor has variable resistance – but it's also capable of something unusual. When a current is passed through it, the memristor offers some resistance. When the current is removed, the memristor 'remembers' the resistance it offered and maintains it.

In a neuromorphic chip, each memristor can serve as an artificial synapse, with its resistance level representing the strength of the connection between two neurons.

Memristors are nanomaterials and don't take up much space. Their energy demand is also very small.

They are usually made of a thin layer of titanium dioxide (TiO_2) sandwiched between two metal electrodes. Most oxide-based memristors on the market or in prototypes rely on a small conductive filament that forms and breaks inside a thin layer of metal oxide. This filamentary mechanism lets the device switch between different resistance states but tends to be fickle: filaments grow unpredictably or need relatively high voltages to form, which can increase the energy demand.

A better memristor

The researchers, led by Babak Bakht, a professor in the Department of Materials Science and Metallurgy at Cambridge, created a p-n junction at the interface between a hafnium-based oxide film and an underlying titanium oxynitride layer.

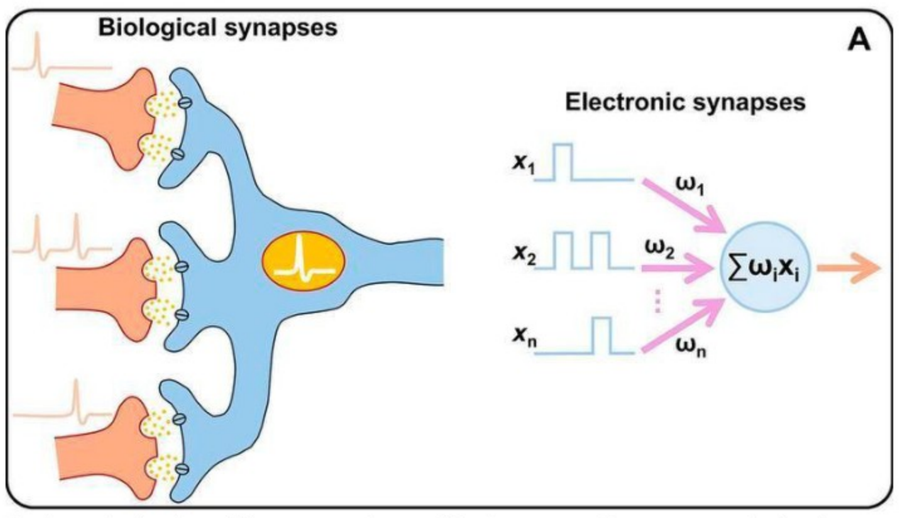
A p-n junction is an interface that works like a gate: electrons can cross from one side to the other if the energy barrier between them is low enough. If the barrier is low, more electrons will flow, and the resistance will be smaller.

The junction thus works like an adjustable electronic gate in the device. The researchers raised or lowered the barrier by gently pushing ions in the film with low-voltage electrical pulses. This changed the device's resistance smoothly instead of turning a filament on or off. The memristor's behaviour was also more predictable from one cycle and one device to the next than previous designs.

The field of neuromorphic computing aims at recreating the human brain's architecture by building electronic devices that act more like synapses and neurons than like traditional transistors and RAM chips

A memristor switches when it changes from one resistance state to another (like high to low). Conventional oxide memristors need a certain minimum current to trigger this. In laboratory tests, on the other hand, the hafnium-based memristor required a million-times less current to switch. This, the researchers estimated, could significantly reduce AI energy consumption by up to 70% if widely adopted. The various resistances can also be used to represent a range of values and be used to perform calculations directly where the data is stored, instead of moving it to a separate processor.

The team's experiments also revealed changes in the device's resistance that mimicked the working of synapses in the brain. Small changes in input produced small changes in output while big changes in input yielded big changes in output – a relationship called linearity. The devices also exhibited an analogue of spike-timing-dependent plasticity. Here, if one neuron fires just before another, the connection between two neurons strengthens; if the order is reversed, it weakens. The memristors could also endure tens of thousands of switching cycles and retained their programmed states for about a day, sufficing for many on-chip learning tasks.



The human brain takes a different approach to traditional computers. Every synapse — the junctions where neurons communicate — both stores and processes information locally, which means memory and processing are fused inside the same biological hardware. DOI: 10.1126/SCIADV.AEC2324

Hafnium oxide is already widely used in advanced CMOS transistors, which means chip manufacturers know how to deposit and integrate it at scale. By showing that hafnium-based films can reliably behave like synapses and with a low energy demand, the Cambridge team has narrowed the gap between cutting-edge neuromorphic research and the use of semiconductors in industry.

However, there is a catch: the multicomponent films used in the study currently require fabrication temperatures around 700 °C, which is far higher than the temperature used to make commercial semiconductors, and the process also takes longer. The researchers wrote in their paper that they are currently working to ensure future production of this neuromorphic chip aligns with conventional technologies.

Neuromorphic engineering is the branch of engineering that seeks to create applications that emulate the brain's structure using three-dimensional arrays of neuron-like and synapse-like components that interact in complex ways. The underlying technologies promise to require less energy than regular GPUs. The Cambridge memristor could be a part of these brain-inspired devices. That said, even if today's neuromorphic circuits can replicate the behaviour of millions of neurons, they are still a long way from being as complicated as the human brain. The Cambridge team's work has improved synaptic components and has made it easier to build larger, even more energy-efficient neuromorphic systems.

(Shamim Haque Mondal is a researcher in the Physics Division, State Forensic Science Laboratory, Kolkata. shamimmondal709@gmail.com)

Blowing in the wind: Research showed that a tree's leaf density had a major effect on where pollen ended up. ALEX JONES/UNSPLASH

New tool predicts how pollen travels through cities

Vasudevan Mukunth

Every spring, lakhs of people suffering from allergies brace for sneezing fits and itchy eyes as trees release pollen into the air. Now, a team of researchers from France and the U.S. has built a tool that can predict exactly how pollen travels through a city once the wind picks it up. In the study, published in *Physics of Fluids*, the team created a computer simulation method they called DF-PIBM, short for 'direct-forcing porous immersed boundary method'. Basically the researchers wrote computer code that treated a tree like a sponge, with air flowing through its leaves and branches, and then tracked pollen grains as the wind carried them off.

Trees are a major source of airborne allergens in cities. As climate change stretches the pollen season and urban municipalities plant more trees for shade, understanding where pollen goes has become a public health concern. Thus far, scientists lacked precise tools to simulate what happens to pollen at the scale of a single tree in a real urban environment.

The simulation divided the tree into cells and calculated the wind speed and pressure inside each one. When the pressure in a cell exceeded the force required to shake a grain loose from a flower, the simulation released that grain into the air and tracked its journey using the laws of physics.

As climate change stretches the pollen season, understanding where pollen goes has become a public health concern

The detachment force for a pollen grain is roughly 50 billionths of a newton, roughly the weight of a single human cell. The model accounted for this as well as the density of leaves in different parts of the tree. Before applying their tool to real trees, the team checked it against a series of known cases – including air flowing past cylinders and spheres – to confirm it produced accurate results. Then they compared its predictions against wind measurements taken around an oak tree in Denmark using laser-based instruments called LiDARs. The model matched the measurements to within about 5%, which the researchers considered good.

Then they applied the model to two real trees: an oak tree and a linden tree near a university hospital in Rouen, France. The linden tree's pollen is known to trigger hay fever and coughing.

The simulations showed that a tree's leaf density had a major effect on where pollen ended up. A tree with fewer, more spread-out leaves, like oaks, released pollen in a relatively even cloud that spread slowly. A denser tree pushed pollen through in more turbulent bursts. Within just a few seconds of wind contact, tens of thousands of pollen grains could become airborne. The researchers released around 1 lakh simulated pollen grains in the linden tree experiment and tracked them over 4 minutes of simulated wind at 5 km/hr. The results showed pollen concentrating in the tree's wake, the area directly downwind, which is also where pedestrians are most likely to be exposed. The team acknowledged that their model is still a first step. It doesn't yet account for pollen grains colliding with each other or sticking to surfaces. Future versions could be scaled up to simulate entire neighbourhoods, helping city planners decide where to plant which trees.

(mukunth.v@thehindu.co.in)

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

Forest of wonders: a quiz on unusual trees

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1
The outer bark of this tree peels away at different times of the year, revealing a green inner bark that matures into shades of blue, purple, orange, and maroon. It's the only species of its kind indigenous to the northern hemisphere. Name this tree.

QUESTION 2
The _____ is often called the "upside-down tree" because its branches look like roots sticking into the air. Its large, seemingly swollen trunk can store more than 1 lakh litres of water to endure the harsh conditions of the African savannah. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 3
While most trees grow fruit on their branches, the Jabuticaba is X, meaning its flowers and fruits grow directly on the main trunk and on older limbs, giving the tree the appearance of being covered in large, dark warts. What is X?

QUESTION 4
_____ is the name of a large colony of quaking aspens in Utah in the U.S. While it looks like a forest of 47,000 individual trees, they all share a single underground root system and are genetically identical, making it one of the heaviest living organisms on the earth. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 5
This tree gets its name due to its roots, which are stilt-like and grow from the base of the trunk. While scientists debate the extent of movement, it is believed the tree can 'walk' several centimeters a year by growing new roots towards sunlight and letting the old roots die off. What is the name?

Visual: Name this grove in east California which is also the name of a (non-clonal) tree here that's 4,857 years old — the oldest of its kind on the earth. The name comes from a biblical patriarch who is said to have lived for almost a millennium. OKE (CC BY-SA)

Answers to to April 14 quiz:
1. Moment when earth's axis is perpendicular to the sun – **Ans: Spring equinox**
2. Zodiac system used in India – **Ans: Sidereal**
3. Difference in degrees between tropical and sidereal systems today – **Ans: 23°**
4. Apparent path the sun takes through the sky – **Ans: Ecliptic**
5. Why the sun doesn't return to the same point in the sky on a date – **Ans: Precession of the equinoxes**

Visual: **Pico della Mirandola**

First contact:
Tamal Biswas | K.N. Viswanathan | Prem Nath Tiwari | Anmol Agrawal

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Fall in government's wheat procurement since last rabi season

69 in per cent. Wheat, the main rabi (winter) crop, is procured through the April-March period. However, much of the grain is bought in the first few months itself. The agencies have procured 15.30 lakh tonne so far since the start of the procurement operation from April 1. PTI

Amount Saudi Arabia is set to deposit in Pakistan's central bank

3 in $ billion. The funds will provide a financial boost to Pakistan, where the economy has come under strain during regional tensions linked to the conflict between the U.S. and Iran. Authorities said earlier that the country would return $2 billion deposited by the UAE in Pakistan's central bank in 2019. PTI

People missing in boat capsize in Andaman Sea

250 At least 250 people, including Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi nationals, were missing after a boat capsized in the Andaman Sea recently on the way to Malaysia, according to the United Nations' refugee and migration agencies. PTI

The amount the EU is set to invest in 57 defence projects

1.3 in $ billion. The European Commission said it will invest 1.07 billion euros in 57 defence projects in critical sectors such as AI, cyber security, drones and anti-drone systems. The investments are supporting the goals of the EU Commission's Defence Readiness Roadmap 2030. REUTERS

Japan's support for Southeast Asia amid the oil crunch

10 in $ billion. The initiative, dubbed "Power Asia", will see Japan contribute 1.6 trillion yen to Southeast Asian nations to strengthen their energy supply chain and help them better procure crude and petroleum products. AFP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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What changed in Hungary's election?

What makes Viktor Orban's defeat significant? What led to his fall after 16 years? Who is Peter Magyar? What changes can Hungary expect? Does Orban's defeat signal the political limits of right-wing populism?

EXPLAINER

G. Sampath

The story so far:
In Hungary's general elections held on April 12, Viktor Orban (63), the Christian nationalist Prime Minister who had been in power since 2010, slumped to a shock defeat. His party, Fidesz, won only 55 seats (37.8% vote share) in the 199-member National Assembly. The Opposition Tisza Party, led by Peter Magyar (45), a former Fidesz leader, secured a two-thirds majority with 138 seats (53.6% of the vote), while the far-right Mi Hazank (Our Homeland Movement) won six seats (5.8% vote share).

Peter Magyar cheers as he arrives at the entrance of the Presidential Sandor Palace on Wednesday. AFP

What is the significance of Orban's defeat?
Under Mr. Orban, Hungary had effectively become an electoral autocracy. In 2011, he used his two-thirds majority in the National Assembly to pass a new Constitution that centralised power and eroded democratic checks and balances. A new law forced hundreds of judges to retire, who were then replaced by Orban loyalists, weakening judicial independence. He secured near-complete control over the media by selectively channelling government advertising and ensuring that critical outlets were either shut down or taken over by his loyalists.

He also manipulated Hungary's electoral system to his advantage through various means that favoured large parties like Fidesz, including granting voting rights to non-resident ethnic Hungarians in Central Europe and gerrymandering (redrawing electoral constituency boundaries to suit his party). These changes helped him win consecutive elections. With pollsters predicting another term for Mr. Orban, his loss came as a shock to the world.

Given how he had altered Hungary's democratic landscape and foreign policy and sought to project Hungary as a model for 'illiberal democracy', his exit assumes historic significance.

What were the reasons for his defeat?
Political analysts have flagged four major reasons: a stagnant economy, high unemployment, a broken healthcare system, and a strong anti-corruption campaign led by Mr. Magyar. The rise of Gen Z voters also played a part. It was a key factor in the 76.5% voter turnout – the highest since Hungary's post-1990 democratic transition – indicating a widespread sentiment that this was a high-stakes election.

A growing public perception that Mr. Orban was running a 'kleptocracy', along with a stuttering economy, was a double blow that led to mass discontent and a yearning for change.

Who is Peter Magyar?
A former ally of Mr. Orban, Mr. Magyar broke away from the party and resigned from all government positions in 2024 following a political scandal in which the then-President had pardoned the head of a children's home who had been convicted of covering up child sexual abuse.

Mr. Magyar utilised the scandal to reposition himself from a system insider to an Opposition leader. He amplified it by releasing a politically damaging audio recording of his ex-wife, Judit Varga, who was Justice Minister at the time and had countersigned the pardon. The recording was made secretly when they were still married.

Founding a new political party would have taken time and posed administrative hurdles, so Mr. Magyar joined the little-known Tisza party to contest the European Parliament elections. He won, becoming a Member of the European Parliament (MEP) in 2024. Soon after, he conducted a series of high-decibel media interviews and public rallies in which he accused the Orban regime of rampant corruption, repeatedly claiming that "a few families own half the country".

Ahead of the 2026 elections, he campaigned extensively across Hungary, advocating urgent change with the slogan, "Now or never". His mass mobilisation efforts paid off.

Does Magyar represent a clean break with the Orban era?
Yes and no. Mr. Magyar has the two-thirds 'supermajority' needed to roll back the anti-democratic constitutional changes made by Mr. Orban, and he has promised to do so. He has also called on all of Mr. Orban's 'puppets' in the government to resign. Hungary's institutions, especially the judiciary and academic institutions, could regain some of their lost autonomy.

On the foreign policy front, there will be a clear break from Mr. Orban's pro-Russia, anti-EU stance, with Mr. Magyar going the other way – pro-EU and anti-Russia. In fact, his election rallies were marked by chants of "*Ruszkik, haza*!" ("Russians, go home!") – a reference to the Hungarian revolution of 1956, when the country was under Soviet occupation, and an expression of resentment at Mr. Orban's close ties to Moscow. However, while he is likely to reduce Russian influence in government and support the EU's $103 billion loan package to Ukraine – which Mr. Orban had blocked – he is not in favour of accelerating Ukraine's EU membership and is wary of being seen as overly pro-Kyiv. At the same time, he aims to reduce Hungary's dependence on Russian energy.

On immigration, Mr. Magyar could end up being tougher in material terms. He wants to cut back on the guest worker programme to protect Hungarian wages.

Does Orban's defeat mark the limits of populism?
Mr. Orban's populism had served as an ideological inspiration for similar political formations across the world, including the MAGA movement. Vice President J.D. Vance even visited Hungary to lend his weight to Mr. Orban's election campaign.

The combination of a skewed electoral system, an unlimited campaign war chest, and a clueless Opposition had made Mr. Orban appear invincible for 16 years. But a new political party led by an energetic leader demonstrated that even in an electoral autocracy, if the Opposition hits the streets and successfully engages younger voters, it may not be impossible to defeat a dispensation that uses populist policies as a cloak for rampant cronyism and economic mismanagement.

THE GIST

- Viktor Orban suffered a shock defeat, with a growing perception of a "kleptocracy" and a stuttering economy leading to mass discontent and a yearning for change.
- Peter Magyar led a strong campaign marked by anti-corruption messaging and mass mobilisation, securing a two-thirds majority and signalling a potential rollback of Orban-era changes.

Why is the Strait of Hormuz critical to global energy flows?

What is a maritime chokepoint? How does international law govern these waters?

Smriti Sudesh

The story so far:
Since late February, the Strait of Hormuz has emerged as the centre of a deepening energy and security crisis. The escalation followed U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iran, after which Tehran tightened restrictions on the narrow waterway. The situation intensified further this week when President Donald Trump ordered a U.S. naval blockade of vessels sailing to or from Iranian ports. As of April, a ceasefire has allowed a limited number of ships to pass through. However, continued threats and the U.S. blockade have kept most tankers away, reducing daily transits from around 130 vessels to just a few on several days.

What is a maritime chokepoint?
A maritime chokepoint is a narrow stretch of sea through which a large share of global trade must pass, with no easy alternative route. These are natural geographic bottlenecks created by coastlines, islands, or narrow channels that concentrate shipping into tight corridors. Because ships cannot easily reroute, these chokepoints become critical nodes in the global trading system. Today, between 70 and 80% of the world's oil moves by sea, and much of it passes through such chokepoints. Even a single incident can disrupt traffic almost immediately. The consequences can be far-reaching. Energy prices tend to rise sharply, shipping costs increase and supply chains can be disrupted. This can lead to shortages of critical commodities, contributing to inflation and slowing economic growth.

Why is the Strait of Hormuz critical?
The Strait of Hormuz is widely regarded as the world's most important maritime chokepoint. It connects the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean and is a primary export route for oil producers in the region. At its narrowest, the strait is just 21 nautical miles (38 km) wide. Under normal circumstances, about 21 million barrels of oil – roughly one-fifth of global consumption – pass through it each day. In addition to crude oil, large volumes of liquefied natural gas from Qatar and the UAE also move through this route. Nearly 80% of these energy flows go to Asia, making countries such as India, China, Japan, and South Korea dependent on the route.

What are the other key global chokepoints?
Beyond Hormuz, the global trading system relies on a small set of equally critical maritime chokepoints. These include the Strait of Malacca, the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, the Suez Canal, and the Panama Canal.

The Strait of Malacca runs between the Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian island of Sumatra. It forms the shortest sea route between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea, making it a key route for trade between West Asia, Africa, and East Asia.

The Bab el-Mandeb Strait sits between the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa. It acts as the southern gateway into the Red Sea, through which ships must pass before reaching the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean. This makes it a crucial link in the trade route between Asia and Europe.

The Suez Canal is an artificial waterway that cuts across Egypt, connecting the Red Sea to the Mediterranean. It allows ships to avoid the long journey around Africa.

Further west, the Panama Canal cuts across the narrow Isthmus of Panama, linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. This makes it a vital route for trade between Asia, the Americas, and Europe, eliminating the need to sail around South America.

How does international law apply to these waterways?
The movement of ships through international chokepoints is governed primarily by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Under its provisions, straits used for international navigation are subject to the principle of "transit passage", which allows ships and aircraft of all nations to pass continuously and without obstruction. However, countries along the strait can regulate shipping for safety and environmental reasons, but they cannot stop ships from passing through or impose selective restrictions. This right of passage is broadly recognised under international law, though in practice, enforcement depends on naval strength and coordination between countries.

THE GIST

- The Strait of Hormuz is a narrow stretch through which about one-fifth of global oil and large volumes of LNG pass daily, making it central to global energy flows and trade.
- Blockades or threats can sharply reduce shipping, push up energy prices, disrupt supply chains.

'Hoardings will be used to promote enrolment in govt. schools and PU colleges'

School Education and Literacy Minister, Madhu Bangarappa interacting with *The Hindu* in Bengaluru on Wednesday. K. MURALI KUMAR

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

To increase enrolment in government schools and pre-university (PU) colleges, the State government has decided to advertise these institutions by installing hoardings in public places for the first time.

Speaking at an interaction with *The Hindu* on Wednesday, Minister for School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa said that admissions for government schools and PU colleges for 2026-27 had already begun and they were working towards improving enrolment.

"Like private schools and colleges put up hoardings promoting their institutions, we will also put up two hoardings per taluk and also at high footfall areas like railway stations, bus stands, etc. These hoardings will mention all facilities available at these institutions and in case of schools schemes for students. The hoardings may also feature high performing students from these institutions," he said.

"We are working towards completing the teacher transfer process by this June," Mr. Bangarappa said.

"Since the teacher transfer process was starting late every year, educational activities were being hampered. This year, some amendments have been made in the transfer rules, which the Governor has recently signed. Therefore, the transfer guidelines will be formulated and an order will be issued soon. The transfer process will be completed by the end of June. This will also help in the recruitment of guest facility required for each school," the Minister said.

"Children learn best if the officers of the department and teachers work well. In this context, a meeting was held with the officers and discussions were held regarding the start of the 2026-27 academic year. The printing of books, distribution of uniforms, shoes and socks are already in progress."

The Minister said that steps have been taken to ensure that all children have access to all materials, including uniforms and books, on the first day that schools reopen.

Expressing satisfaction over "record" results of II PU students this year, Mr. Bangarappa said some tough decisions and reforms implemented over the past three years were finally paying off.

"We first plugged examination malpractices by webcasting from all centres. The results fell drastically. Following this, we introduced several measures like awarding grace marks for one year which was opposed by even the Chief Minister, introducing three annual exams, reducing the passing marks from 35 to 33, grading for third language in SSLC. We have got good results in II PU and we hope SSLC results will also be good this year," he said.

He further said that timely completion of syllabus, early appointment of guest lecturers, subject-wise blueprint also helped improve results.

Man pushes ailing mother to death from third floor

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 42-year-old man allegedly murdered his elderly mother by pushing her from the terrace of a four-storey residential building in R.R. Nagar on Wednesday.

The victim, Savithramma, 75, had been suffering from paralysis and was bedridden for the past four to five years. The accused, Venkatesh has been taken into custody.

The family was residing on the second floor of a four-storey building in BEML Layout. Venkatesh, who is married and lives with his wife and mother, allegedly carried Savithramma to the terrace before pushing her down. Passersby who reportedly noticed the incident alerted the police.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the accused was distressed over his mother's prolonged illness. During questioning, he reportedly told police that he could no longer bear her suffering and decided to kill her.

The police conducted a spot inspection, and initiated a probe. Based on initial findings and his alleged confession, Venkatesh was arrested.

4 women held for running prostitution racket

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) sleuths arrested four women for allegedly forcing other women into prostitution across multiple locations in the city. Acting on specific intelligence, the CCB's Women Protection Squad identified three rented houses being used for illegal activities.

Raids were conducted on different days earlier this week, during which four women were rescued. Among them, two were from other States.

The accused women were taken into custody. During the interrogation, they reportedly confessed to luring customers over the phone and arranging meetings at the rented houses with the intention of making quick money.

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, APR. 16	
RISE 06:07	SET 18:32
RISE 04:56	SET 17:31
FRIDAY, APR. 17	
RISE 06:06	SET 18:32
RISE 05:39	SET 18:29
SATURDAY, APR. 18	
RISE 06:06	SET 18:33
RISE 06:26	SET 19:31

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	15
Mysuru	36	20
Bengaluru	34	24

Bengaluru Today
35ºC The weather will be dry. Day will be warm with uneasy afternoon. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
36ºC Morning will be pleasant. Day will be very warm and uneasy. Night also will be pleasant. Dry weather to occur.

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THE HINDU
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ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ
BELAGAVI URBAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, BELAGAVI.
ಫ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್/ದೂರವಾಣಿ: 0831–2470342, 2470257 E-mail: belagavibuda@gmail.com

No BUDA/PWD/E-TENDER/2026-27/93 DATE: 15-04-2026

Tender Notification (e-procurement Portal)

Commissioner, Belagavi Urban Development Authority, (BUDA) Belagavi invites tenders from eligible Agencies for the works taken under Belagavi Urban Development Authority Grants in standard tender document through E-Procurement-02 portal. For further details visit online website **kppp.karnataka.gov.in** The deatils of the time table of tenders are as follows.

Sl No	Name of Work	Indent No	EMD Amt in Rupees
1	E Auction for the deposit BUDA Fund for Maximum one year Period (Around 60.00 Crore) only Public sector Banks should participate	BGMUDA/2026-27/ AUCTION146	2,10,000/-

Tender Form Fee as per E Procurement Portal:
1) Last Date for Submission of Tender Quarriese –08-05-2026 upto 4.30 pm
2) Date& Time to confirm Participation of Interest in Auction14-05-2026 upto 5.00 Pm
3) Start Date and Time of Auction 15-05-2026 from 10.00 Am
4) End Date and Time of Auction 16-05-2026 at 5.00 Pm

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Belagavi Urban Development Authority
Belagavi

Sd/-
Commissioner
Belagavi Urban Development Authority
Belagavi

DIPR/BELAGAVI/102/2026-27/DESHPANDEPUBLICITY

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರಕಾರ
(ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ)
ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರ್‌ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ,
ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ವಿಭಾಗ, ಯಾದಗಿರಿ

ಸಂಃಕಾನಿಇಂ/ಲೋಇ/ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್/ತಾಂಶಾ–1/2026–27/96, ದಿನಾಂಕಃ 13–04–2026

ಅವಧಿ ವಿಸ್ತರಣೆ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ವಿಷಯಃ 2025–26 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಲೆಕ್ಕಶೀರ್ಷಿಕೆ 5054 ಕೆಆರ್‌ಡಿಸಿಎಲ್ ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕರೆಯಲಾದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಃ 34281 & 35122 ಗಳಿಗೆ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅವಧಿ ವಿಸ್ತರಣೆ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಕುರಿತು.
ಉಲ್ಲೇಖಃ ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಕಾನಿಅ/ಲೋಇ/ಯಾವಿ/ತಾಶಾ–1&3/ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ/ 2025–26/ 3693, ದಿನಾಂಕಃ 31–03–2026.

ಉಲ್ಲೇಖಿತ ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಮೂಲಕ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾದ 2025–26 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಲೆಕ್ಕಶೀರ್ಷಿಕೆ 5054 ಕೆಆರ್‌ಡಿಸಿಎಲ್ ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕರೆಯಲಾದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಃ 34281 & 35122 ಗಳಿಗೆ ಕೆಲವೊಂದು ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಕಾರಣಗಳಿಂದ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅವಧಿ ವಿಸ್ತರಣೆ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ. ವೇಳಾ ಪಟ್ಟಿ ವಿವರಗಳು ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತೆ ಇರುತ್ತವೆ.

ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ	ವಿವರಗಳು	ಮುಂದೂಡಿದ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳು
1	ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟೀಕರಣ ಕೋರುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ	21–04–2026 ಸಮಯ 17.30 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ
2	ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ	24–04–2026 ಸಮಯ 16.00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ
3	ಟೆಂಡರ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್	27–04–2026 ಸಮಯ 11.30 ಗಂಟೆ ನಂತರ
4	ಟೆಂಡರ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್	29–04–2026 ಸಮಯ 11.30 ಗಂಟೆ ನಂತರ

ಟಿಪ್ಪಣಿಃ 1)ಯಾವುದೇ ಮಾರ್ಪಾಡು ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ರಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಡಲಾಗುವುದು. 2)ಉಳಿದಂತೆ ಷರತ್ತುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳು ಇರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರರು,
ವಾ.ಸಾ.ಸಂ.ಇ/ಯಾದಗಿರಿ/26/ಕೆ.ಎಸ್.ಎಂ.ಪಿ.&ಎ/2026–27 ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ವಿಭಾಗ ಯಾದಗಿರಿ.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, Sri.C.M.Veerabhadra Reddy S/o Late. Muniswamy Reddy is the absolute owner of the property described in the Schedule hereunder.

It is brought to the notice of the general public that, our client has negotiated and decided to purchase the Schedule Property from the above said owner. All persons having any claim against or to the Schedule Property or any part thereof by way of inheritance, mortgage, sale, conveyance, MOU, Agreement to Sell, G.P.A, transfer, lease deed, tenancy, license, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, exchange, possession, adverse possession or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to submit the same in writing along with documentary proof to the undersigned at their office as shown below **within 15 days from the date of publication hereof**, failing which our client shall proceed without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, will be considered as waived.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the land bearing **Sy.No.16/20 (Old Sy.No.16/2),** measuring an extent of **1 Acre 31 Guntas** situated at Harohalli Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Rural District and bounded on:
East by: Sy.No.16/3 Land belongs to Dashyrath Reddy.
West by: Sy.No.16/1 Land belongs to Narasimha Rao Tirumala Shetty & Salamma Francis Property & Road.
North by: Chokkasandra Village Border & Sy.No.81/2 & Prasanna Kumar Property.
South by : Sy.No.16/2 land Belongs to Uma, Shivashankar, Shivakumar Reddy Property.

Dated this 16th day of April 2026 at Bangalore

M/S. LEGAL NEXUS
Advocates & Consultants
No. 428, 24th Main, 25th Cross, Sector-2, H.S.R Layout, Bangalore – 560 102.
Phone: 080-65555914,
Mobile: 9945688974; 99164150690

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, DR.SANJAY RAO S/o Mr. K.Jayaram Rao, **aged about 59 Years,** Aadhaar No: 942833761974, **Residing at:** #2013, 100 Ft Road, HAL, 2nd Stage, Indiranagar, Bangalore, Karnataka-560068 is the absolute owner of the property described in the Schedule hereunder.

It is brought to the notice of the general public that, our client has negotiated and decided to purchase the Schedule Property from the above said owner. All persons having any claim against or to the Schedule Property or any part thereof by way of inheritance, mortgage, sale, conveyance, MOU, Agreement to Sell, G.P.A, transfer, lease deed, tenancy, license, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, exchange, possession, adverse possession or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to submit the same in writing along with documentary proof to the undersigned at their office **within 15 days from the date of publication hereof**, failing which our client shall proceed without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, will be considered as waived.

SCHEDULE 'A' PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the immovable converted property bearing Sy. No. 84/2 admeasuring 1 acre of Panathur Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk and bearing Municipal No. 42, Panathuru village Ward No.149, Mahadevapura Zorie, Bangalore and bounded as follows:-
East by : Lands in Sy. Nos. 84/3, 85/6 and 79/1;
West by: Lands in Sy. No 84/1 and property of K. Narayana Reddy,
North by: Remaining Portion of land in Sy.No. 84/2b and Panathur Main Road
South by: Private Property.

SCHEDULE 'B' PROPERTY

4707/125312 undivided right, title and interest in the Schedule A Property which in all works out to and admeasures to 1597.41 Sq ft.

SCHEDULE 'C' PROPERTY

All that Piece and Parcel of Unit Number 102, having **BBMP-E-Khata bearing No. 3683131195** an Office space on the First Floor being constructed on the Composite Schedule Property measuring super built area of **4707.0 Square Feet** named as **"VASWANI PRESIDIO"** as per the Floor Plan annexed hereto as Annexure, Two mechanical car parking slot for Two cars in the Upper Basement & Three Single Car Parking in the Lower Basement.

Dated this 15th day of April 2026 at Bangalore

M/S. LEGAL NEXUS,
ADVOCATES & CONSULTANTS,
No. 428, First Floor, 25th Cross, 24th Main
HSR Layout, Sector 2, Bangalore – 560 102
Phone: 080-65555914
Mobile: 9945688974; 9164150690

भारतीय खेल प्राधिकरण
SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
खेल विभाग / DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS
(An Autonomous Body under Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports)
(युवा कार्यक्रम और खेल मंत्रालय के तहत एक स्वायत्त निकाय)

Room No.210, SAI-Head Office Building, SAI-Headquarter, Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium Complex (East Gate No.10) Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003

File No.01-04001(01)/1/2026-66/150 Date: 30-01-2026

NOTIFICATION

SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR ENGAGEMENT OF PERFORMANCE ANALYST ON REGULAR BASIS

Sports Authority of India (SAI) invites applications for filling up the 48 posts of PERFORMANCE ANALYST (Direct recruitment) in the Pay Level-06 (Rs.35400-Rs.112400/-) of 7th CPC from the eligible Applicants in 07 Sports Science Disciplines in SAI.

The details of the said post and other relevant information is available on SAI website i.e., **https://sportsauthorityofindia.nic.in**

उपनिदेशक (DEPUTY DIRECTOR)
मानव संसाधन प्रभाग - II (HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION -II)
साखेप्रा मुख्य कार्यालय (SAI HEAD OFFICE)

CBC 47103/12/0002/2627

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION (ISRO)
ISRO TELEMETRY TRACKING AND COMMAND NETWORK (ISTRAC),
CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP (CMG)
Peenya Industrial Estate, Bengaluru-560 058.

BRIEF E-TENDER NOTICE

On behalf of the President of India, sealed item rate e-tenders are invited online from contractors of appropriate class for the following work in NIT by Group Head, ISTRAC, ISRO, Peenya, Bengaluru-560 058 (Phone No. 080-28094541, 4185, 4144).

Name of work	Construction of Automated Antenna Measurement Facility at SCC Campus, ISTRAC, Bengaluru (Electrical works - Internal Electrification, Telephone, LAN, Smoke detection, Earthing and Lightning Protection System)
E-tenders Notice	ISTRAC/CMG/E/CON/E-Tender-08/ 2026-2027 dated 15.04.2026
Estimated Cost put to tender	Rs. 29.52 Lakhs
Tender document details	E-tenders
Period of completion in months reckoned from the 15th day of date of issue of work order	Six (06) months
Period during which the tender document can be downloaded	From 16.00 hrs. on 16.04.2026 to 02.05.2026 till 16.00 hrs.
Bid clarification	From 11.00 hrs. on 17.04.2026 to 03.05.2026 till 16.00 hrs.
Last date and time of reply to bid clarification	04.05.2026 up to 16.00 hrs.
Last date and time for receipt of tenders	05.05.2026 up to 16.00 hrs.
Due date and time of opening of tenders	07.05.2026 after 11.00 hrs.
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Rs. 59,040/-

For eligibility criteria and other details, Interested tenderers may please refer to the Detailed bilingual (Hindi-English) Notice Inviting tender (NIT) on the website: **https://www.isro.gov.in/Tenders.html** and tender free view at **https://www.tenderwizard.com/isro**

Sd/- Group Head, CMG

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್‌ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ,
ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ, ಇಲಾಖೆ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ
ಸಂ: 03/2026–2027 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 10.04.2026

ಮಂಡ್ಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ವಿವಿಧ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಐಟಂವಾರು ದರದ ಟೆಂಡರುಗಳ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ KW-3 ರ ರೀತಿ ದ್ವಿಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ https:// kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಾಗಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ 10–04–2026 ರಿಂದ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ವಿಚಾರಣೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 02–05–2026 ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 04–05–2026 ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ 05–05–2026 ಸಂಜೆ 4.31 ಗಂಟೆ ನಂತರ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳು, ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 06–05–2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಬೆಲೆ ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ರಂತೆ. ಕಾಲಮಿತಿ: ಮಳೆಗಾಲ ಸೇರಿ 3 ತಿಂಗಳು ಒಟ್ಟು 2 (ಎರಡು), ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.100.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಬೆಲೆ ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ರಂತೆ, ಕೆಲಸಗಳ ವಿವರ, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ, ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ., ಮೊತ್ತ ಮುಂತಾದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸದರಿ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು.

ಟಿಪ್ಪಣಿ:– (1) ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ಸಹಿ ಮಾಡಿರುವವರು ಯಾವುದೇ ಕಾರಣಗಳನ್ನು ನೀಡದೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯ ಮುಂದೂಡುವಿಕೆ /ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ರದ್ದುಗೊಳಿಸುವ/ಟೆಂಡರ್ ನಿರಾಕರಿಸುವ ಹಕ್ಕನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. (2) ಇನ್ನು ಮುಂದೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳು ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನ ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ, ಬದಲಾಗಿ ವಿದ್ಯುನ್ಮಾನ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆ ವೇದಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ–ಕಾ.ಇಂ.,ಲೋ.ಇ.,ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಹಿಸಿನಿ–ಮಂ/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಪಿ&ಎ/038/2026–27

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E-tender Notice No.:HSFC/CMG/2(22)/C/173/2026-27 Date: 15.04.2026

BRIEF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

On behalf of the President of India, Online Item rate tenders are invited through E-tendering for the following works:

Title of work	**Construction of Size stone masonry compound wall for 11.50 acres DOS/ISRO land at Devanahalli, Bengaluru**
Estimated Cost put to tender	**₹ 88.84 Lakhs**
Period of Completion in months reckoned from the 15th day of date of issue of work order	**(06) Six Months**
Period during which the tender document can be requested	**From 11:00 Hrs. on 16.04.2026 To 23:30 Hrs. on 03.05.2026**
Period during which the tender document can be downloaded	**From 11:10 Hrs. on 16.04.2026 To 23:59 Hrs. on 03.05.2026**
Bid clarifications	**From 11:30 Hrs. on 16.04.2026 To 14:30 Hrs. on 04.05.2026**
Reply to Bid clarifications	**Up to 17:00 Hrs. on 04.05.2026**
Last date and time for receipt of tenders	**Up to 10:30 Hrs on 05.05.2026**
Due date and time of opening of tenders (Technical bid)	**11:00 Hrs. on 05.05.2026**
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	**₹ 1,77,680/-**

For eligibility criteria and other details, Interested tenderers may please refer Detailed bilingual (Hindi-English) Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) from website **www.isro.gov.in** for further details and Purchase of tender documents visit **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO.**

Sd/- Head CMD, CMG, HSFC

KARNATAKA STATE MINERALS CORPORATION LIMITED
(A GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA UNDER TAKING)
Regd. Office "A" Block, 5th Floor, TTMC Building, BMTC, Shanthinagar, Bangalore- 560027, Phone: 080-22278813, 22278814, 22278815, 22278816
Fax : 080-22213172, Website: ksmc.karnataka.gov.in

1. Tender No. KSMCL/2026-27/SE0064 Date :15.04.2026

E-TENDER FOR SELECTION OF SALE CONTRCTOR

Karnataka State Minerals Corporation Limited (KSMCL) has called e-Tender to select Agency for Sale Contract from Doddamudavadi Granite Quarry, Bengaluru South District through e-Procurement portal.
Interested parties may download Tender documents from e-procurement portal, GOK website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. For any support, interested persons may contact Mobile No: 9448510684 & 9620558595/8073422957.

Sd/-
General Manager (MKT)
DIPR/CP/197/SHIRDISAI/2026-27

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, KATHYAYINI Chandrasekhar Holenarasipur Subba Rao residing at Krishna Krupa 329/1, 19th Main Road, 2nd Block,Jayanagar Bengaluru 560011,have changed my name from Kathyayini Chandrasekhar Holenarasipur Subba Rao to Kathyayani Chandrasekhar vide Affidavit KA28086294848500Y dated 07.04.2026 for all future purpose.

I, Divya Nair, Shriram Luxor, Chikkagubbi, Bangalore - 560077 have Changed my Minor Son's Name from Rishit Vishnu Nair to Rishith Nair (DOB: 16.01.2016) for all future purposes vide affidavit no. 4261687367 dated 08.04.2026.

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SHIVANI Dixit W/o Deepak Kumar, resident of SMQ No 24/02, Gagan Vihar Camp, Air Force Murugeshpalaya, Bengaluru-560017 have changed my name from Shivani Dixit to Shivani Bajpai vide affidavit dated 14-04-2026 before Notary A.R.Muneer Ahmed.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, M CHANDRASEKARAN, Service No. 1381751N S/o Late T Maniraj, aged about 58 years, residing at # 47, Abbiah Reddy Layout, 8th Cross, Doddabanaswadi, Bangalore-560043, do hereby declare that I have changed my daughter name from **SWATHI .C** to **SOUNDARYAA C** henceforth she shall be known and called as **SOUNDARYAA C** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 10/04/2026 sworn before Advocate and Notary XXIX Addl. Chief Judicial Magistrate, Bengaluru City

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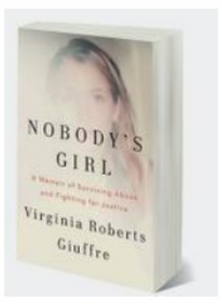
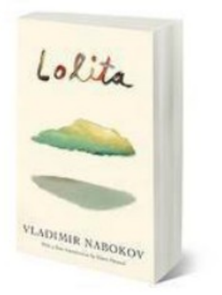
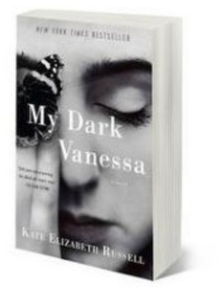






Speaking out: An activist installs an unofficial sign renaming the Buckingham Palace memorial garden in honour of Virginia Giuffre. REUTERS

Beyond consent: how power, legal ambiguities, and attitudes enable abuse

Several books underline how the line between agency and coercion blurs in age- and power-imbalanced relationships, exposing younger, less powerful individuals to enduring harm

Preeti Zachariah

A little under a year ago, Virginia Giuffre, one of the most vocal and prominent survivors of Jeffrey Epstein's and Ghislaine Maxwell's decades-long sex trafficking ring, died by suicide. According to a statement released by her family, the 41-year-old "lost her life to suicide, after being a lifelong victim of sexual abuse and sex trafficking... In the end, the toll of abuse is so heavy that it became unbearable for Virginia to handle its weight."

Giuffre's *Nobody's Girl: A Memoir of Surviving Abuse and Fighting for Justice,* which came out in October last year, six months after her death, is a chilling testimony to that statement. Co-written with Amy Wallace, the book traces Giuffre's tragic life, marked by sexual abuse, neglect, mental and physical health challenges, financial strife, and, as Wallace mentions in the foreword, even domestic abuse.

Nobody's Girl, which became a bestseller almost immediately, and has been described by reviewers as "important", "courageous", "sad", and "devastating", is a harrowing and often triggering read.

"I know many monsters. As a child, I suffered nearly every kind of abuse: incest, parental neglect, severe corporal punishment, molestation, and rape. As a teen, I had been sexually trafficked by another paedophile even before I met Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell, but these two doubled down on my suffering," writes Giuffre. She constantly reminds the reader that Epstein was not an outlier, but a product of a society that enables men like him through indifference and selective blindness. "Epstein is dead, but the attitude that allowed him to do what he did? It's alive and well."

Under the microscope

The plethora of novels and memoirs depicting complex, often predatory liaisons between adolescents and older men suggests that Giuffre is onto something. Art, after all, is often inherently mimetic, whether it be cult classics such as Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* and Marguerite Duras' *The Lover,* or Kate Elizabeth Russell's *My Dark Vanessa*, JM Coetzee's *Disgrace*, Jenny Erpenbeck's *Kairos,* as well as two memoirs, one by Vanessa Springora and another by Jill Ciment, both called *Consent*. All these books place age- and power-imbalanced sexual relationships under the microscope in different ways, dissecting ideas of agency, dysfunctionality, abuse, power imbalance, sexuality, the opacity of desire, and moral greyness in romantic love. One of the key themes that emerges out of a close reading of any of these texts is how the conversation around ephebophilia (a sexual preference for adolescents), while morally reprehensible, can often be legally ambiguous. Epstein "took a certain glee in what he saw as a loophole in society's moral code...the fact that different nations and states define the age of consent differently," Giuffre writes in one part of her memoir, adding that he often argued that "these laws were arbitrary and meaningless; no one could convince him that sex with minors was wrong, because no one could agree on what a minor was!"

Deviations from morality

Cultural churns in society, too, can provide cover for sexual relationships with minors. Springora, whose memoir chronicles a relationship she had at 13 with the 50-something French writer Gabriel Matzneff (whom she refers to only as G), talks about how the libertine sexual culture of the 1970s, which continued to cast its shadow on the decade after, enabled this liaison. "In 1977, an open letter in support of the decriminalisation of sexual relations between minors and adults, entitled "Regarding a Trial," was published in the newspaper *Le Monde*, signed by several eminent intellectuals, psychoanalysts, well-known philosophers, and writers at the peak of their careers," she writes, listing them: Roland Barthes, Giles Deleuze, Simone de Beauvoir, André Glucksmann and Louis Aragon. (Incidentally, Duras refused to sign this letter.) This meant, writes Springora, that "deviations from conventional morality were viewed with a certain level of tolerance, even admiration."

A loaded question that emerges from these texts, even when there is "consent", is this: how does agency play out in situations where one party, almost always the older person, clearly holds more power, yet the less powerful person has "chosen" to participate? Springora, for instance, writes about struggling to see herself as a victim under the circumstances. "How is it possible to acknowledge having been abused when it's impossible to deny having consented, having felt desire, for the very adult who was so eager to take advantage of you," she asks.

Vanessa Wye, the protagonist of *My Dark Vanessa,* who was seduced by her 42-year-old teacher, Jacob Strane, at the age of 15, also simply refuses to see herself as a victim. The novel is a braided narrative that switches between the past and the present, in which Wye, now an adult, continues to see the relationship through a rose-coloured lens.

Even when Strane is outed by another student, Wye continues to defend him and stay in touch with him, recalling their relationship as an intense, special love affair, in which she sees herself as an equal partner. "I'm not a victim because I never wanted to be, and if I didn't want to be, then I'm not. That's how it works. The difference between rape and sex is a state of mind. You can't rape the willing, right?" she writes. It is only much later that she manages to come to terms with her past and rewrites her own narrative, finally conceding, "I was an obvious target. He chose me not because I was special, but because he was hungry and I was easy..."

Long-lasting damage

Victimhood is clearly a complex, often malleable mindset, and allowing space for that complexity is important to enable a nuanced conversation about such relationships. What does seem categorical, however, is the long-term damage it causes to a young person, as all these texts suggest. "Trauma is such a cunning enemy," writes Giuffre in *Nobody's Girl,* pointing out that while one often appears to heal from the physical and mental impacts of it, "recovering victims like me know too well how trauma lurks in the shadows, always there. No matter how many years go by, or how many therapists you see, it can rise, unbidden, seemingly out of nowhere." Her own later struggles, ending in her untimely death, appear to have been a testament to this.

In a final handwritten note released by her family days after her passing, she writes, "Mothers, Fathers, Sisters, and Brothers need to show the battle lines are drawn, and stand together to fight for the future of victims. Is protesting the answer? I don't know. But we've got to start somewhere."

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

U.S. civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. wrote his open Letter from Birmingham Jail on April 16, 1963, while imprisoned in Alabama

Prathmesh Kher

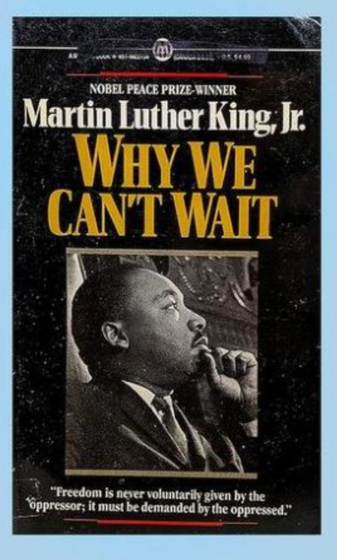
QUESTION 1
The letter famously argues that "injustice anywhere is…" what?

QUESTION 2
To what document or statement was King responding in the letter?

QUESTION 3
King compares himself and the protesters to which early Christian figure?

QUESTION 4
How was the full letter first published publicly?

QUESTION 5
Which historical examples does King use to justify civil disobedience?


NOBEL PEACE PRIZE-WINNER
Martin Luther King, Jr.
WHY WE CAN'T WAIT
"Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed."

Visual Question:
How is the 1964 book Why We Can't Wait connected to the letter from Birmingham jail?

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Leonardo epitomised which worldview? **Ans: Renaissance humanism**
2. Which is his famous work, which is regarded as the world's most famous individual painting? **Ans: Mona Lisa**
3. This painting depicts a nude man in two overlapping standing positions, inscribed within a circle and a square. Name the painting. **Ans: Vitruvian Man**
4. Leonardo collaborated with which artist on his The Baptism of Christ? **Ans: Andrea del Verrocchio**
5. The Museo Ideale Leonardo da Vinci is located in which city in Italy? **Ans: Florence**
Visual: Identify this painting. What is it called, and in which year was it done? **Ans: Aerial screw, 1488**
Early Birds: C. Saravanan | K.N. Viswanathan | Rajib Ganguly | Erfanally Oosmany

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

"The world must be coming to an end!"
"Why do you say that?"
"You're actually referring to the dictionary. Is something wrong?"
"Sujatha always uses big words when she talks to me. I want to tell her that whenever I talk to her, I always get confused."
"Why don't you tell her that?"
"I want to tell her that by using some big words myself."
"Why do you want to use high sounding words? Your logic discombobulates me!"
"What was that word again?"
"Discombobulate. The 'i' in the first syllable 'dis' is like the 'i' in words like 'fit', 'bit', and 'hit'. The 'o' in 'com' is like the 'a' in 'china', 'amount', and 'apply'."
"The vowel in the next syllable sounds like the 'o' in words like 'bob', 'sob', and 'mob', I suppose?"
"Very good. The 'u' in 'bu' is sometimes pronounced like the 'a' in 'china'. And the final syllable is pronounced like the word 'late'."
"And where is the main stress?"
"Why don't you tell me?"
"I would say it's on 'bob'."
"Excellent guess. The word is pronounced discomBOBulate. Any idea what the word means?"
"I've never heard...."
"...that's what happens when someone discombobulates you. They leave you completely confused."
"It always happens when I am in Sujatha's company. Can you give me an example of how the word is used?"
"Certainly. The letter from the Minister completely discombobulated the Chairman."
"I met Gopa's wife recently. She is one discombobulated woman! How does that sound?"
"I guess it's the result of being in Gopa's company all these years. He discombobulates a lot of people."
"That's true."
"My mother is so discombobulated these days. It must be the heat."
"Or your company! How about this example? I told Murthy not to let the heat of the argument discombobulate him."
"That's a great example. And speaking of Murthy, have you seen his new house?"
"I have. It's huge isn't it?"
"It's a lollapalooza."
"Another word which I can use with Sujatha. What was it again?"
"L..o..l..l..a..p..a..l..o..o..z..a. The first 'o' is like the 'o' in words like 'top', 'stop', and 'pop'. The 'a' in the second syllable 'la' rhymes with the 'a' in 'china', 'about', and 'amount'."
"The 'a' in 'pa' is pronounced the same way, I suppose?"
"My! You are sharp today. The 'a' in the final syllable is pronounced the same way too."
"I see. But what about the fourth syllable 'loo'?"
"It's pronounced like the 'oo' in words like 'fool', 'cool', and 'pool'."
"What does 'lollapalooza' mean?"
"It's a slang word which means 'something big, something wondrous'. That's one of the meanings, anyway. Lalitha fell down. You should see the bump on her head. It's a lollapalooza."
"The view from Murthy's house is truly beautiful. A real lollapalooza. How does that sound?"
"Good. Lata's singing voice is remarkable. A lollapalooza."
"Some people say the same thing about my voice too."
"Now that is a lollapalooza."
Published in The Hindu on April 25, 2000

Word of the day

Askance: with suspicion or disapproval

Synonyms: warily, skeptically, doubtfully

Usage: *The teacher looked askance at his excuse.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/askance

International Phonetic Alphabet: /əskɑːns/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Funding for B-SMILE projects: GBA proposes, corporations oppose

The Greater Bengaluru Authority is planning to tap into funds raised by the five city corporations through municipal bonds; but some corporations are resisting proposal, arguing they have already given enough funds to B-SMILE

Chetan B.C.
BENGALURU

In a bid to mobilise more funds for projects to be taken up by Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited (B-SMILE), an SPV formed to spearhead big-ticket projects, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) is planning to tap into funds raised by the five city corporations through municipal bonds – ₹200 crore each, totalling to ₹1,000 crore.

However, some corporations are resisting the proposal, arguing they had already given enough funds to the B-SMILE and have cited better uses for the funds raised through municipal bonds elsewhere.

While the GBA is a pan city body, the five corporations are autonomous bodies and cannot be forced to part with their funds. The nudge by the GBA to transfer the funds raised through municipal bonds to the B-SMILE and the resistance from corporations to do so, will likely be the first instance where the autonomy of the five corporations, under the new set-up, will be tested.

Sources said the GBA wants the corporations to transfer the funds raised through municipal bonds to the B-SMILE to fund 13 elevated corridors to be built at an estimated cost of ₹18,000 crore. The Draft Detailed Project Reports (DPR) are ready for these projects.

Sources said GBA wants the corporations to transfer funds raised through municipal bonds to B-SMILE to fund 13 elevated corridors

Sources said the argument has been that the funds transferred from corporations would be used for elevated corridors in the jurisdiction of the respective corporations.

Funds for B-SMILE

Resistance from a few corporations also stem from the fact that the five corporations have already allotted 14% of their total outlay- ₹2,840.55 crore of ₹20,217.66 crore to the B-SMILE. If municipal bonds funds are added then nearly 20% of the total outlay will be cornered by the B-SMILE.

The B-SMILE had hypothecated ad revenue and premium FAR revenue of the city to secure a loan of over ₹19,000 crore to build tunnel roads, even before the five corporations were formed. Four of the five corporations have shared revenue from these streams to the B-SMILE in their budgets, apart from grant-in-aids as well.

GBA nudge opposed

Municipal finance expert Srikanth Vishwanathan, CEO, Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy, said nudging the corporations to transfer funds raised through municipal bonds to the B-SMILE to fund projects decided by the State government, was against the spirit and principle of autonomy of the corporations.

"This kind of proposal only shows that the government is yet to understand the spirit of a five corporation set-up, it has itself created," he said. He further said that this might also amount to misuse of the incentive scheme of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) for raising municipal bonds.

While GBA is a pan-city body, the five corporations are autonomous bodies and cannot be forced to part with their funds

"Further, this kind of transfers will be happening, if they do, when the corporations do not have elected councils and ahead of elections," he said.

Incentive

The MoHUA has announced an incentive of ₹13 crore for every ₹100 crore raised by local bodies through municipal bonds.

To raise funds, a corporation must demonstrate creditworthiness and maintain it through timely repayments. Therefore, sources in the corporations suggest that it may be more prudent to use funds for smaller projects that can be completed and made accessible to the public sooner.

"By implementing smaller projects, the budgetary requirement is also lower and regular repayments backed by stable revenue sources help civic bodies maintain creditworthiness," the source explained, adding that this approach offers a two-way advantage for corporations.

Further, the Union government provides incentives to civic bodies for undertaking infrastructure works through various "urban challenge" programmes. Bengaluru qualifies for these funds. However, projects taken up using these funds, may require additional funds, which the corporations suggest can be filled through funds raised through municipal bonds.

In contrast, the B-SMILE has estimated that the 13 proposed elevated corridors would cost around ₹18,000 crore and would be implemented in phases.

While investing in these projects may be beneficial in the long-term, their longer implementation period makes prioritising smaller projects relatively more viable, multiple corporations seem to opine.

Amid these differing views and uncertainties, the corporations are yet to take a final call on how to utilise funds raised through municipal funds. Only the Bengaluru East City Corporation, had in its budget, announced that it would use the ₹200 crore for a grade separator and an extension of an under construction flyover. The remaining four corporations have not announced how these funds would be utilised.

SPCA urges crackdown on underage driving during summer holidays

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Mohan Kumar Danappa, Member of the Karnataka State Police Complaints Authority, has written to the Director-General and Inspector-General of Police urging strict action against the rising incidents of underage driving during the summer holidays.

In his letter, Mr. Danappa highlighted that minors operating vehicles had become widespread across the State.

He noted that many underage riders lack awareness of traffic rules and legal consequences.

He further pointed out that, despite knowing the law, some parents continue to allow or even train their minor children to drive out of affection.

Mr. Danappa referred to a 2021 incident in Gangavati, Koppal district, where a civil court ordered compensation of ₹14 lakh in a case involving a minor driver. He also mentioned a recent case in which a court imposed a one-day jail term and a ₹30,000 fine in a similar offence.

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Door-to-door house listing of Census begins today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The house listing phase of Census 2027 will begin on Thursday across the State, with enumerators set to undertake a massive door-to-door exercise.

Over 26,000 personnel, including enumerators and supervisors, have been deployed for the exercise in the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) area.

The drive aims to collect comprehensive and accurate data of all households in the city. As many as 26,616 personnel have been deployed, including 23,705 enumerators and 2,912 supervisors.

As part of the first phase, Census officials will visit residential areas, including apartment complexes, to collect household and demographic information. GBA officials have urged all residents and apartment associations to cooperate fully with the teams, provide accurate details, and facilitate access to premises for smooth enumeration.

Officials emphasised that participation in the Census is a mandatory national duty under the Census Act, 1948. They warned that refusal to provide information or obstruction of the Census work could invite legal action as per provisions of the Act.

The drive aims to collect comprehensive and accurate data of all households in the city. FILE PHOTO

Enumerators across city corporations

Bengaluru West City Corporation:	**6,653**
Bengaluru South City Corporation:	**5,068**
Bengaluru North City Corporation:	**4,497**
Bengaluru Central City Corporation:	**4,068**
Bengaluru East City Corporation:	**3,419**

'Illegal and arbitrary' SIR faces Statewide protests

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Describing it as "illegal and arbitrary", a human rights group under the banner 'My Vote, My Right' held a Statewide protest against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, with protesters alleging that large-scale deletions of voter names have undermined democratic participation and political equality.

Protests were held in Tumakuru, Udupi, Belagavi, Bengaluru and Raichur, among other districts of the State. In Bengaluru, around 30 citizens gathered in front of the Vidhana Soudha, raising slogans and taking a pledge to defend political equality. Protests were also held in several other areas in the city.

The coalition cited data from other States to highlight the scale and impact of the revision exercise.

Data cited

In West Bengal, it claimed that over 27 lakh voters whose appeals are pending have been barred from voting, which it termed a violation of the Representation of the People's Act, 1950.

Protests were held in Tumakuru, Udupi, Belagavi, Bengaluru and Raichur, among other districts of the State. FILE PHOTO

In Bengaluru, around 30 citizens gathered in front of the Vidhana Soudha, raising slogans and taking a pledge to defend political equality

According to the group, those marked "Under Adjudication" are disproportionately Muslim, and in some constituencies the number of such deletions exceeds electoral victory margins, influencing outcomes.

In Uttar Pradesh, the coalition claimed that over 2.04 crore names were removed, reducing the electorate from 15.44 crore to 13.39 crore, a decline of 13.2%. In Tamil Nadu, it said 74 lakh names were deleted, bringing the electorate down from 6.41 crore to 5.67 crore.

The protesters were also critical of the recent Supreme Court's decision, which they claimed "declined to order interim reinstatement of deleted voters".

The coalition warned that the decision could set a precedent affecting electoral integrity.

The coalition demanded that the Karnataka government take a strong stand against the SIR, called on citizens to oppose the process, and urged the Supreme Court to ensure restoration of voting rights to those allegedly removed arbitrarily.

PM proposes nine-point collective pledge

Prime Minister Narendra Modi urges people to prioritise water conservation stressing upon optimum utilisation of available resources

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday called for collective the adoption of a set of nine behavioural commitments by the citizens in the country's march towards progress.

Addressing a gathering after inaugurating the Sri Guru Bhairavaikya Mandir in Adichunchanagiri Mutt in Mandya district, near Mysuru, on Wednesday, Mr. Modi placed before the people nine resolutions aimed at strengthening social responsibility, health, sustainability, and self-sufficiency.

He urged people to prioritise water conservation stressing upon optimum utilisation of available water resources.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi offers prayers at the Sri Guru Bhairavaikya Mandira at Sri Kshetra Adichunchanagiri, in Mandya on Wednesday. ANI

He referred to the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign and called upon the people to honour their mothers by planting a sapling and protecting the environment and 'Mother Earth'. A pledge for cleanliness also figured in the Prime Minister's appeal. He said ensuring cleanliness of religious places and public places in villages and cities was the collective responsibility of all the citizens. Mr. Modi also made a pitch for 'Swadeshi' during his address and called upon the people to adopt Indian products and strengthen Indian manufacturers and industries.

The Prime Minister made a push for domestic tourism by calling upon people to tour different parts of the country to understand it and savour its beauty. Reminding the gathering that Mandya is a land of hard-working farmers, Mr. Modi said the farmers should do more chemical-free and natural farming.

Emphasising the need for consumption of healthy food, Mr. Modi said the region around Mandya understands the importance of ragi and said youth should include millets in their food.

Mr. Modi also said former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda had popularised the 'ragi mudde' dish. He further called for a reduction in the use of cooking oil by 10%. He called upon the people to make yoga, sports and fitness a part of their lives. Finally, his ninth resolution was about developing service-mindedness.

Mr. Modi said service to the needy makes the society strong and gives people a purpose in their lives.

During his address, Mr. Modi paid homage to the late seer Balagangadharanatha Swami by recalling his services to the society. Mr. Modi recalled the efforts of late Sri Balagangadharanatha swamiji in conserving peacocks, highlighting the seer's compassion not only towards humans but also animals and birds. Mr. Modi, who received a peacock memento from the swamiji, shared his personal bond with the bird.

Located in Nagamangala taluk of Mandya district, the Adichunchanagiri Peacock Wildlife Sanctuary is among the few wildlife sanctuaries dedicated to the protection of peacocks.

Ballot paper law notified

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Paving the way for the introduction of ballot papers in the local bodies election, The Karnataka Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj (Amendment) Act, 2026, was notified on Wednesday after it received Governor's assent on Tuesday.

The government reverted to paper ballots for local body elections in response to concerns about EVM credibility and voter privacy reflecting growing consensus to strengthen electoral mechanisms that prioritise anonymity and transparency, the Act said.

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E PROCUREMENT SHORT TENDER NOTICE

RFP. No. 02/MD/CE/AGICL/2026/2nd Call, Dt. 15.04.2026
Name of Work: "AGICL-RFP for Selection of Firm for Design-Build of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji "Smruthi Vanam" at Amaravati Exhibition cum Museum, Interpretation Centre, Library and Park" -Phase-I.
The bid can be downloaded on Ap e-procurement portal from **16-04- 2026** to **23-04-2026** up to 14:00 Hrs. Due date for submission of Bid is **23-04-2026** up to 15.00 Hrs, Technical Bid opening date is on **23-04-2026** @16.00Hrs. For further details Please refer to **www.apeprocurement.gov.in** and **www.agicl.org.**

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(2) 130/PROC/MAU61-USI0HB(BG)/7/2026
(3) 131/MAU61-USI0HB(OTH)/124/2026-HB
(4) 132/PROC/MAU61-USI0HB(OTH)/125/2026-HB
(5) 133/PROC/MAU61-SI0HB(OTH)/121/2026-HB
(6) 134/PROC/MAU61-SI0HB(OTH)/123/2026-HB
(7) 135/PROC/MAU61-USI0HB(OTH)/122/2026-HB.
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Sd/- Managing Director, **AGICL**, Amaravati

CM submits 18-point memorandum to PM

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who received Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Bengaluru on Wednesday, submitted an 18-point memorandum to him. The memorandum included requests for a special grant of ₹6,000 crore for the development of Bengaluru, early clearance for the Mekedatu balancing reservoir project, and the gazette notification of the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal Award-II.

"While Karnataka continues to be among the largest contributors to the national exchequer and a leader in economic and social development, certain long-pending issues require the Union government's urgent attention," the Chief Minister stated in the memorandum.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on his arrival in Bengaluru on Wednesday. ANI

For Bengaluru

Among the key demands, he said that in the light of Bengaluru's contribution to the national economy, early release of ₹6,000 crore to strengthen infrastructure and sustain its global competitiveness was warranted. It sought the inclusion of the Bengaluru-Mysuru segment in the proposed high-speed rail corridor, and urged the Centre to expedite the release of committed Central assistance for the Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project, besides initiating the Bengaluru-Mumbai High-Speed Rail Corridor.

The memorandumk sought the immediate release of the pending grants to the tune of ₹5,495 crore recommended by the 15th Finance Commission to address fiscal imbalances. The memorandum sought to bring to the Centre's notice that despite fulfilling all conditions, Karnataka was yet to receive grants of ₹2,860 crore for FY 2025-26 for gram panchayats.

The State urged the Centre to direct the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Central Water Commission to expedite the approval of the Mekedatu project. It also sought the release of the already announced ₹5,300 crore Central assistance for the Upper Bhadra Project and the status of National Project.

The memorandum urged the Centre to gazette the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal-II Award and declare the Upper Krishna Project (Stage-III) as a National Project. It also sought Wildlife Clearance for Kalasa-Banduri Nala project (Mahadayi).

The memorandum urged the Union government to ensure an equitable allocation of at least 40-45 tmc. ft. of water to the State under the Godavari-Cauvery and Bedthi-Varada link projects of the Inter-Linking of Rivers programme.

The State government further urged the Centre to include the State's decision of providing 56% reservation for SC/ST and OBCs. It also appealed to the Centre to include certain Other Backward Castes, which have been recommended by the State government, in the Central List of Scheduled Tribes.

The State urged the Centre to provide dedicated financial support of ₹5,000 crore annually for the development of the Kalyana Karnataka region besides establishing at least one Public Sector Undertaking in each of the districts of North Karnataka.

It also sought expedited Forest, Environmental and Wildlife clearances for the Sharavathi Pumped Storage Hydropower Project. With respect to Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), Karnataka sought the release of the pending central share of ₹17,554 crore.

Karnataka to unveil GIA 2.0 at 'Bridge to Bengaluru' in New Delhi

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

With the aim of deepening sectoral partnerships and expanding global market access, the Department of Electronics, Information Technology & Biotechnology, Government of Karnataka, will unveil Global Innovation Alliance 2.0 in New Delhi on April 17, at 'Bridge to Bengaluru 2026 – Dialogue with Diplomats'.

The programme, which has supported over 2,000 startups so far, has also facilitated partnerships spanning more than 40 countries and 60-plus global MoUs and collaborations.

"As we enter what we see as Karnataka's 'Deep Tech Decade', our focus is on strengthening the entire innovation value chain – from research and talent to capital and global market access. Deep tech and AI are central to this vision, and through GIA 2.0, we aim to make these partnerships more structured, outcome-driven, and aligned to emerging sectors," said Priyank Kharge, Minister for Electronics, Information Technology & Biotechnology. The inaugural edition of Bridge to Bengaluru, an initiative by the State to bring together governments, diplomats, startups, industry leaders, and research institutions to deepen collaboration across emerging sectors, saw representatives from 35-plus countries in 2025. This year around 80 countries will be represented, according to Mr. Kharge.

Priyank Kharge.
SUDHAKARA JAIN

It will also serve as a curtain-raiser to the 29th edition of the Bengaluru Tech Summit, to be held from November 17 to 19, 2026, at BIEC, Bengaluru, under the theme 'AI & Beyond'.

According to the department, Karnataka's strengthened global engagement is translating into significant investments and strategic positioning, resulting in 31 new Global Capability Centres in the State in 2025 and ₹6350 crore in data centre investments. Out of 31, seven GCCs were established in places beyond Bengaluru.

Aurad in Kalaburagi logs season's high of 45°C, as heat intensifies in State

The Hindu Bureau
KALABURAGI

Aurad hobli in Kalaburagi district recorded the highest maximum temperature of 45°C in Karnataka over the past 24 hours, ending 8.30 a.m. on Wednesday, as heat wave conditions tightened their grip across large parts of the State, according to a bulletin released by the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre (KSNDMC).

The bulletin noted that several places in Kalaburagi, Raichur, Bidar and Vijayapura districts, along with parts of Yadgir and Bagalkot, recorded temperatures ranging between 42°C and 45°C on Tuesday.

Isolated pockets in Ballari, Gadag, Koppal, Uttara Kannada, Belagavi, Chitradurga, Haveri and Vijayanagara districts also experienced similarly high temperatures.

Data from the KSNDMC weather monitoring network showed that a large number of locations reported temperatures above 42°C, including 24 locations in Kalaburagi, 22 in Raichur, 18 in Bidar and 14 in Vijayapura. Several other districts also recorded multiple such high-temperature locations, indicating a widespread heat spell across North Interior Karnataka.

The India Meteorological Department has forecast a further rise in maximum temperatures across the State over the next five days.
FILE PHOTO

Temperatures were above normal by 1.6°C to 3°C in parts of north interior and south interior Karnataka, while remaining near normal elsewhere, the bulletin said.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast a further rise in maximum temperatures across the State over the next five days.

Heat wave or hot day conditions are likely to prevail in one or two pockets of north Interior Karnataka between April 15 and 19, while hot and humid conditions are expected in parts of Coastal Karnataka during the same period.

Heat spell

Among other high readings, several locations in Kalaburagi district, including Ainapur and Atanur, recorded temperatures above 44°C, while parts of Bidar and Raichur districts also reported temperatures nearing 44°C, underscoring the severity of the ongoing heat spell.

Authorities have advised people to take precautions, including avoiding direct exposure to the sun during peak hours, staying hydrated, and reducing outdoor activity to prevent heat-related illnesses.

BANGALORE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
T. Chowdaiah Road, Kumara Park West, Bengaluru - 560 020

CORRIGENDUM

With reference to the e-Auction Notification No. BDA/EM/e-Auction/T-01/2026-27 dated 04.04.2026 published in this newspaper on 05.04.2026, the below mentioned sites have been withdrawn from the e-Auction.

Sl. No.	Notification Sl.No.	Layouts	Site No.
1	3	Sir.M.V.L. Further Extension 7th Block, Gidadakonenahalli	1781/2
2	4		1804/2
3	6		1814
4	7		1189/1
5	11		880
6	8	Sir.M.V.L. Further Extension 9th Block, Gidadakonenahalli	1831/1
7	10		1832/1
8	16	Sir.M. Visveswaraiah Layout 1st Block	159/13
9	24	Jnanabharathi 2nd Block, Nagadevenahalli	1027
10	25		1026
11	27	Jnanabharathi 3rd Block, Nagadevenahalli	46
12	28		84
13	30		28
14	31	Nagarabhavi 1st Phase, Nagarabhavi	1023
15	32		1029A
16	57	Sir.M. Visveswaraiah Layout 3rd Block, Sonnenahalli	2603
17	59		1172
18	83	Sir.M. Visveswaraiah Layout 6th Block, Ullal & Manganahalli	2597
19	88	Jnanabharathi 3rd Block, Valagerahalli	393
20	89		394
21	90		390
22	91		418
23	117	Arkavathi Layout 1st Block, Jakkur	JK 59
24	118		384/A
25	134	HBR 2nd Block, Rachenahalli	508
26	138	Arkavathi Layout 11th Block, Kacharakanahalli	1122
27	139		RH 266
28	141	Arkavathi Layout 2nd Block, Sampigehalli	SH 257
29	143	Arkavathi Layout 3rd Block, Sampigehalli	SH75
30	148	Arkavathi Layout 15th Block, Thanisandra	TS1061
31	151		316
32	153		TS384
33	154		TS401
34	155	Arkavathi Layout 20th Block, Thanisandra	TS856A
35	156		TS854A
36	157		TS932
37	158		TS939A
38	159		1088
39	163	Arkavathi Layout 3rd Block, Venkateshapura	467/B
40	166		TS940A
41	169	Arkavathi Layout 20th Block, Thanisandra	TS822
42	171	Arkavathi Layout 15th & 20th Block, Thanisandra	TS540
43	172	Arkavathi Layout 15th Block, Thanisandra	TS801
44	175	Arkavathi Layout 8th Block, Srirampura	917
45	181	Anjanapura Township 8th Block, Anjanapura	743/A
46	182		755/A
47	205	Banashankari 6th Phase, 11th Block, Ganakallu	275
48	222	Banashankari 6th Phase, 4th Block, Hemmigepura	647
49	228	Banashankari 6th Phase, 4th Block, Lingadeerahalli	2520
50	252	Banashankari 6th Stage, 1st Block, Turahalli	393
51	267	Banashankari 5th Block, Vaddarapalya	31
52	268	Further Extension of Banashankari 5th Stage, 4th 'H' Block, Vaddrapalya	141

The below mentioned Sites as been included in e-Auction
Last date for bid closing: 30.04.2026 up to 5.00 p.m. (Delta time 5.00 minutes)

Sl. No.	Site No.	Dimensions in Meters		Area in Sq.Mtr.
		East to West	North to South	
Arkavathi 1st Block, Jakkur				
1	396	24.00	12.00	288.00
2	397	18.00	14.00	252.00
Initial bid price per Sq.Mtr. is Rs.73,500/- Contact No.8494933686				
Arkavathi 3rd Block, Sampigehalli				
3	SH43	18.00	(13.90+13.60)/2	247.50
Initial bid price per Sq.Mtr. is Rs.87,500/- Contact No.8494933686				

The other terms and conditions remain the same. BDA regrets for the inconvenience.
Helpline / Whatsapp: 9483166622 (24x7) @BDAOfficialGok

Sd/- Engineer Member

From Page One

Govt. told to 'strictly and faithfully' implement menstrual leave policy

"This court would also observe that the State ought not be deterred or constrained by misplaced apprehensions founded upon a superficial invocation of Article 14. Men and women stand equal in the eyes of the law, yet they are biologically distinct. To acknowledge such differences, particularly in matters concerning health, dignity, and bodily autonomy, is not to transgress the guarantee of equality but to give it substantive meaning," the court observed.

Other petitions pending

Interestingly, the petitions - filed by the Bangalore Hotels' Association, the Karnataka Employers' Association, the Bangalore Employers' Association and 15 women working professionals -- challenging the legality of the ML policy notification issued on November 20, 2025, are pending adjudication before another judge in the Principal bench of the Court in Bengalore along with several intervening applications filed by various trade unions and a group of women advocates supporting the policy and opposing these petitions.

Petitioner's plea

Ms. Chandravva had sought a direction to the government to effectively implement the policy, including for the unorganised sector while complaining that she has not been given menstrual leave as per the policy.

It was contended in the petition that the policy is not known to the employees in several areas, and therefore, the establishments that employ women should create awareness about the said policy.

For unorganised sector

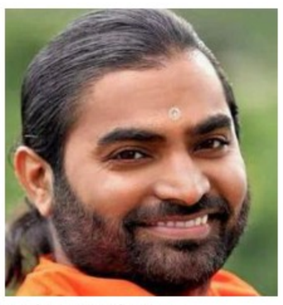
Citing the apex court's verdicts recognising the rights of those unorganised sector workers and the importance of social security benefits to female workers, Justice Nagaprasanna said that it is necessary for the State government now to tap the unorganised sectors to take the benefit of the Government order or the proposed Bill when it becomes an Act.

Pointing out various categories, including daily wage labourers, in the unorganised sector and the November 2025 ML policy mainly aimed at the organised sector, the Court said that it becomes incumbent upon the State to undertake comprehensive measures aimed at sensitising all sectors, both organised and unorganised; and the unorganised sector requires a more facilitative mechanism.

The November 2025 notification stated that ML is available for all permanent, contract and outsourced women employees in the establishments registered under the Factories Act, 1948, the Karnataka Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 1961, the Plantation Labour Act, 1951, the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966, and the Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961.

Harihar Panchamasali seer refuses to abdicate peetha

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI


Vachananand Swami

The tussle between expelled seer Vachananand Swami and trustees of Veerashaiva Lingayat Panchamasali Guru Peetha in Harihar has escalated, with the seer refusing to abdicate the religious chair. The trustees have decided against allowing him to continue.

Sending a strong message to the trustees on Tuesday, Mr. Vachananand said that he will be at the guru peetha in Harihar and called upon devotees to visit the peetha.

Trustee Chandrashekhar Pujar held a press conference on the same day and accused the expelled seer of getting "massage service" from boys staying at the hostel run by the peetha. After the students and their parents complained about the issue and wanted to lodge police complaints, the trustees had convinced them to refrain from doing so in the interest of the community. Mr. Chandrashekhar alleged that when the trustees tried to tell the seer to mend his ways, he revolted against them, and to save himself, he had gotten the 'Leka Kodi' (give accounts) campaign launched with the help of a few followers.

The trustee also made allegations against Arunkumar Pujar, former Ranebennur MLA, who is among those leading the 'Leka Kodi' campaign. He said Mr. Arunkumar's statement that he had donated ₹1.5 crore to the Panchamasali Mutt at Harihar was totally false as Mr. Arunkumar was not in a position to even pay the insurance premium of the car being used by him.

On the contrary, holding a press conference at the guru peetha in Harihar, Mr. Arunkumar dared Mr. Chandrashekhar to make a pledge either at Dharmasthala or Kottureshwar Temple if he had not siphoned off the peetha's funds. He accused Mr. Chandrashekhar of not providing receipts for the donations given to the peetha and alleged that the ₹10 crore released by the State government for construction of the hostel had been utilised for building a compound wall.

Both the seer and the trustees are indicating that they will take the matter to the court of law.

Yana Caves declared Geo-heritage Site of National Importance

The geo-heritage site, as per the Department of Tourism, serves three purposes — conservation, education and tourism

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Yana Caves features massive karst limestone structures, including two prominent monolithic outcrops. K. MURALI KUMAR

Known for its striking black crystalline rock formations and religious significance, the Yana Caves in Karnataka has been declared a 'Geo-heritage Site of National Importance' by the Ministry of Mines through the Geological Survey of India (GSI).

Located in the Western Ghats in Uttara Kannada district, Yana Caves features massive karst limestone structures, including two prominent monolithic outcrops – Bhairaveshwara Shikhara (120 m) and Mohini Shikhara (90 m). The site is also a popular short-trek destination, the GSI, in a letter said.

The region hosts 61 identified karst landforms, shaped over time by natural geological processes. According to the GSI, the formations date back around 2.7 million years and are composed of Precambrian dolomitic limestone. Over millions of years, intense tropical weathering and chemical dissolution have sculpted the terrain into a distinctive karst landscape.

"The twin monoliths dominate the area and are not only significant geological features but are also closely tied to local mythology, drawing pilgrims and visitors alike," GSI said.

A Geo-heritage Site of National Importance refers to a location with unique and irreplaceable geological features – such as formations, fossils or landscapes, recognised for their scientific, educational and aesthetic value. These sites serve as natural records of earth's evolution and are protected for research and geotourism.

The tag granted by the GSI for the State would mean protection of a rare geological asset, promotion of research and learning, and tourism-driven development around the site. The geo-heritage site, as per the Department of Tourism, serves three purposes, namely, conservation, education and tourism. It brings the site under formal recognition, helping prevent damage from unregulated development.

It also turns the site into a scientific and educational resource, functioning as a natural laboratory where researchers, students and the public can study earth's history, geological processes and past climate patterns.

More than 90 sites across the country have so far been identified as National Geological Monuments, geo-heritage sites or potential geo-heritage locations. "The GSI on April 13 informed the Karnataka government that the declaration was made as part of its 176th Foundation Day celebrations," Tourism Minister H.K. Patil said.

Post-mortem of hippo Hamsini conducted

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

The preliminary findings of the post-mortem of the female hippopotamus, Hamsini, at Tyavarekoppa Tiger and Lion Safari in Shivamogga suggest that the animal suffered a severe liver infection that had spread to multiple organs.

In a communique to the media, V.M. Amarakshara, executive director of the safari, said that the animal, who was pregnant, also had a localised vaginal and cervical infection that did not affect the uterus.

The pregnant hippo attacked young veterinarian Sameeksha Reddy on March 19. The veterinarian died the next day. She had entered the animal's enclosure to record Hamsini's body temperature using the thermal camera.

OUR CENSUS
OUR DEVELOPMENT
Karnataka
Houselisting & Housing Census
16th April to 15th May
What will you be asked?
Information of house:
• Building number
• Materials of the floor, walls & ceiling
• Acertain use of house- (Residential/ Non-residential)
• Condition of house
Others:
• Main Cereal consumed
• Mobile number (Only for Census communication)
Basic information about family:
• Number of family members
• Name, sex, caste of the head of the family (SC/ST or others
• Ownership status of the house
• Number of rooms
• Number of married couples living in the house
Amenities:
• Source of drinking water
• Availability of drinking water source
• Main source of lighting
• Access to latrine
• Type of latrine
• Waste water outlet
• Bathroom facilities
• Kitchen & LPG/PNG connection
• Main fuel used for cooking
Assets:
• Radio/Transistors
• Television
• Access to Internet Computer/Laptop
• Mobile phone /Telephone
• Two-wheeler/ four-wheeler
» This stage lays the foundation for population enumeration
» All your information will remain completely confidential and secure
Let us fulfill our responsibility and participate in the Census
CensusIndia2027
cbc 19108/13/0015/2627

Congress MLA Vinay Kulkarni convicted in 2016 murder case

He was named as prime accused in the murder of Yogeshgouda Goudar, a BJP zilla panchayat member, in Dharwad

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A special court in Bengaluru on Wednesday convicted Congress MLA and former Minister Vinay Kulkarni and 16 others in the 2016 murder of a young BJP leader in Dharwad district.

While the MLA has been convicted for both criminal conspiracy and murder under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), he and Chandrashekar Indi were acquitted of the charges under the Arms Act, 1959, as the sanction for their prosecution under this law was not obtained.

Other persons convicted are Vikram Ballari, Kirthi Kumar Basavaraj Kurahatti, Sandeep Saudatti, Vinayaka Katagi, Mahabaleshwar Hongal alias Muduka, Santhosh Saudatti, Dinesh M., Ashwath, Sunil, Nazeer Ahmed, Shahanawaz, Nuthan, Harshith, Chandrashekar Indi, Vikas Kalburgi, and Channakeshava B. Tingarikar.

Santhosh Gajanan Bhat, judge of the special court of sessions for criminal cases against former and present MPs and MLAs, delivered the verdict. The court will hear the argument on quantum of sentence on Thursday.

Vinay Kulkarni

Perjury case

Meanwhile, the court directed the Registrar, City Civil Court, to register a case of perjury against the witness police officers Shivananda Chalavadi, Babu Katagi, Shankaragouda Basanagouda Patil, and independent witnesses Dattatreya Gudaganti, Anand Irappa Uddannavar, Vinayaka Binjiyavar, Mohan Echarappa Mulmuttal, Vivekananda Dalawai, Natraj Sarj Desai and Vijay Kulkarni.

Also, the court gave liberty to the prosecution to file the necessary application seeking sanction to prosecute the approver-turned-witness Shivanand Shrishaila Biradar, who had turned hostile in court.

Timeline

- Yogeshgouda Goudar was hacked to death at his Dharwad gym on June 15, 2016
- Vinay Kulkarni was Dharwad district in-charge Minister when murder took place
- Initially State police probed the case and arrested six persons
- Case was handed over to the CBI in 2019 and the agency named Kulkarni main conspirator over political rivalry
- The CBI arrested Kulkarni in 2020; the Supreme Court first granted bail to him in 2021
- The Supreme Court cancelled his bail in June 2025 on witness tampering allegations, and later ordered his release on bail in February 2026

Case background

Kulkarni, elected to the Legislative Assembly from the Dharwad constituency, was named as prime accused in the murder of Yogeshgouda Goudar, a 26-year-old BJP zilla panchayat member, in Dharwad in 2016.

The case, which has escalated from the local police to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), recently saw the Supreme Court grant bail to the legislator in late February 2026, after his previous release on bail was revoked over witness tampering allegations.

Murder in gym

On June 15, 2016, Yogeshgouda Goudar was attacked and hacked to death in his gym at Saptapur in Dharwad. According to the CBI, the assailants immobilised Yogeshgouda by throwing chilli powder in his face before attacking him with lethal weapons. Kulkarni was a Cabinet minister in the then Congress government in Karnataka when the murder took place.

The Karnataka police, who initially probed the case, arrested six individuals. However, following demands from the victim's family and political pressure, the investigation was transferred to the CBI in 2019 after the BJP came to power in Karnataka.

The CBI filed a supplementary chargesheet in 2020, naming Kulkarni as the 'main conspirator'. The CBI alleged that Kulkarni, who was the district in-charge minister at the time of the murder, perceived Yogeshgouda as a growing political rival in Dharwad, and hired contract killers to eliminate him.

Kulkarni was arrested by the CBI in 2020. He got bail from the Supreme Court in August 2021 under stringent conditions, including a ban on entering Dharwad district. In June 2025, the apex court cancelled his bail, citing sufficient material showing witness tampering and attempts to influence prosecution witnesses, including an approver who later retracted his statement.

In January 2026, he sought bail again, citing changed circumstances as key witnesses had been examined, but the Karnataka High Court refused, citing judicial propriety. On February 27, 2026, the Supreme Court granted bail after noting all witnesses were examined, and directed speedy conclusion of the trial.

Abdul Jabbar suspended from Congress for 'anti-party activities'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A day after the Chief Minister's political secretary Naseer Ahmed was sacked for alleged anti-party activities in the bypolls in Davangere South constituency, the Congress suspended K. Abdul Jabbar, a three-time MLC, from the party's primary membership with immediate effect, citing similar allegations.

Mr. Jabbar had aspired to contest the April 9 bypolls from Davangere South, but was denied a ticket, with the party fielding Samarth Mallikarjun, son of Minister S.S. Mallikarjun.

"Mr. Jabbar, member of the Legislative Council, is hereby suspended from the primary membership of the Indian National Congress with immediate effect, in view of his anti-party activities during the recent byelection in Davangere South Assembly constituency," said an official communication issued on the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) letterhead of State Congress president and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar.

Abdul Jabbar

Party sources said that action was based on AICC report and ground report gathered from the district by the KPCC.

'No evidence'

In response, Mr. Jabbar, who had earlier resigned as chairperson of the minority wing of the KPCC after being asked to do so, said that if there are any audio or video or digital evidence of his anti-party activities, it should be shown.

"I am not sure why action has been taken even before election results. I have not received the letter yet. They have to provide reasons for suspension," he told presspersons.

Acknowledging that he had opposed ticket to Mr. Mallikarjun's family because power was being concentrated in the family, he also accused a section of Muslim leaders - harbouring hopes of Cabinet berths - of being out to trample them.

Party sources allege that three Muslim leaders – Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan, Mr. Naseer Ahmed, and Mr. Jabbar – all seen close to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, were involved in anti-party activities in the run-up to the Davangere South byelection campaign.

On Wednesday, Mr. Siddaramaiah's residence had become a centre of activities as Muslim leaders from Davangere, Rizwan Arshad, MLA, Saleem Ahmed, MLC, and Mr. Mallikarjun were part of a meeting over the Davangere South byelections.

Meanwhile, Mr. Zameer Ahmed, who met Mr. Naseer Ahmed at his residence in Bengaluru, said that the latter was hurt after being sacked. "He is a senior leader. I am also sad about the turn of events. I went to his residence to console him."

Devanuru Mahadeva chosen for Kannada and Culture Department's Pampa Award

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Noted writer Devanuru Mahadeva has been chosen for the prestigious Pampa Award 2025-26 of the Kannada and Culture Department.

Religious personalities Siddarama Sharana of Beldale and Bhanu Keethi Bhattaraka Swami of Jain Mutt of Kambadahalli have been chosen for the Basava National Award and Bhagwan Mahaveer National Peace Award, respectively.

According to a statement by Kannada and Culture Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi, the others chosen for different awards are: Allabhaksh Meerasaheb Mirji (K.G. Kundanagara Gadinada Sahitya Award); Sukanya Maruthi (Danachintamani Attimabbe award); G.V. Sharada (Dr. Gubbi Veeranna award); Prasanna (B.V. Karanth award); Gangarama Chandala (Dr. Siddalingaiah Literary award); V. Hari Ram (Varna Shilpi Venkatappa award); Ashok Gudigar (Jakanachari award); M. Mahadevaiah and B. Lakshmana (Janapadasri award); Siddanagouda Patil (Sangolli Rayanna Award); K. Neela (Akka Mahadevi award); S.G. Siddaramaiah (Kayakayogi Siddarameshwara award); Kallinatha Shastry (Kumaravyasa award), and Prathibha Prahlad (Natyarani Shantala award).

HC notice to govt. on permanent ban on safaris in tiger habitats

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Wednesday ordered issue of notice to the State government on a PIL petition seeking permanent ban on tiger safaris within the notified core/critical tiger habitats across the State citing recent fatal attacks on farmers by tigers in the Nagarahole national park area.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C.M. Pooncha passed the order on the petition filed by V. Ravi Kumar, a Mysuru-based advocate.

Pointing out that safari activities were banned in November 2025 owing to attacks by tigers, the petitioner has alleged that the State Board of Wildlife had decided to set up a technical committee, allegedly due to pressure from politicians and resort owners, for restarting safari.

Stating that recently the recommendations have been made for restarting safari in a phased manner, it has been contended in the petition that the conduct of safari in core/critical tiger areas is contrary to the Suprme Courf's judgment in the Godavarman case.

Meanwhile, the Bench has asked the government to inform it whether zones have been earmarked for conducting safaris and file maps of areas and zones were safaris are conducted.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, Smt.Uma & Sri.Shivashankar & Sri.Shiva Kumar Reddy are the absolute owners of the property described in the Schedule hereunder.

It is brought to the notice of the general public that, our client has negotiated and decided to purchase the Schedule Property from the above said owner. All persons having any claim against or to the Schedule Property or any part thereof by way of inheritance, mortgage, sale, conveyance, MOU, Agreement to Sell, G.P.A, transfer, lease deed, tenancy, license, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, exchange, possession, adverse possession or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to submit the same in writing along with documentary proof to the undersigned at their office as shown below **within 15 days from the date of publication hereof**, failing which our client shall proceed without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, will be considered as waived.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the land bearing **Sy.No.16/2,** measuring an extent of **0-20 Guntas (Out of 1 Acre 20 Guntas)** Situated at Harohalli Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk , Bangalore Rural District and bounded on:

East by : Sy.No.16/2 remaining same Sy No property.
West by : Sy.No.16/1 Land belongs to Narasimha Rao Tirumala Shetty & Road.
North by: Sy.No.16/20 Land Belongs to Sri.C.M Veerabadhra Property.
South by: Sy.No.14/1, Land Belongs to Shanthamma Property & Sy.No.14/5 & 14/6.

Dated this 16th day of April 2026 at Bangalore

M/S. LEGAL NEXUS
Advocates & Consultants
No. 428, 24th Main, 25th Cross, Sector-2, H.S.R Layout, Bangalore – 560 102.
Phone: 080-65555914,
Mobile: 9945688974; 99164150690

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, MRS. MANJULA V. RAJU wife of Late P.S.V. Raju is the absolute owner of the property described in the Schedule hereunder.

It is brought to the notice of the general public that, our client has negotiated and decided to purchase the Schedule Property from the above said owner. All persons having any claim against or to the Schedule Property or any part thereof by way of inheritance, mortgage, sale, conveyance, MOU, Agreement to Sell, G.P.A, transfer, lease deed, tenancy, license, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, exchange, possession, adverse possession or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to submit the same in writing along with documentary proof to the undersigned at their office as shown below **within 15 days** from the date of publication hereof, failing which our client shall proceed without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, will be considered as waived.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of House Site No. 14, bearing BBMP Khatha Property No. 149/145/SY No-33/Site No- 14 (Old Khatha No. 297/33); having PID No.7734218891 measuring East to West 40 feet and North to South 30 feet, in all measuring 1200 Sq.ft, together with a residential building constructed thereon with vitrified flooring, having a total built up area of 1600 Sq.ft., situated at Krishnarajapuram Village, Krishnaraja puram Hobli, earlier Bangalore South Taluk now Bangalore East Taluk and bounded on the:

East by : 20 feet Road;
West by : House Site No.27;
North by : 20 feet Road;
South by : House Site No.13 & K.V. Narasimhaiah Property;

Dated this 16th day of April 2026 at Bangalore

M/S. LEGAL NEXUS
ADVOCATES & CONSULTANTS
th th No. 428, 24 Main, 25 Cross, Sector – 2, H.S.R Layout, Bangalore – 560 102.
Phone: 080-65555914
Mobile: 9945688974; 99164150690

ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಹರಿಹರ–577601

ಫೋ:08192–244266 ka.harihar.cmc@gmail.com

ನಂ.ನಸಹ/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ/ಐಎಫ್‌ಟಿ–25/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 10.04.2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅವಧಿ ವಿಸ್ತರಣೆ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಈ ಕಚೇರಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ನಂ.ನಸಹ/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ/ಐಎಫ್‌ಟಿ–25/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 31.03.2026 ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿನ 01 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಕಾರಣಗಳಿಂದ ಸದರಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳನ್ನು ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡಂತೆ ಮುಂದೂಡಲಾಗಿದೆ.

(1) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 29–04–2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ
(2) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 30–04–2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ
ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂಬರ್:– DMA/2025-26/INDENT6148
ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. 98.00 ಲಕ್ಷ.

ಉಳಿದಂತೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಬದಲಾವಣೆ ಇರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಸದರಿ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ಕೆಲಸದ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಥವಾ ವೆಬ್ ಸೈಟ್ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಆಡಳಿತಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಹರಿಹರ.
ಸಹಿ/–ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಹರಿಹರ.
ವಾಸಾಇ/ಡಿಎಜಿ/21/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/2026–27

STATE ELECTION COMMISSION, KARNATAKA
No.16, 2nd and 3rd Floor, Ballari Road, Sadashivanagara, Bengaluru-560 080. Telephone No: 22205189/193
E-mail: sec.karnataka@ka.gov.in/karsec@gmail.com

No: SECK/ADMN/ETND/2/2026-ADMN Date: 15-04-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

A Tender has been invited through KPP Portal (Tender No. KSEC/2026-27/SE0005) for printing of voter identity cards to the voters of 5 Corporations under the GBA, for the office of the Karnataka State Election Commission. The tender can be submitted through the e-portal by dated: **23-04-2026 time 05.00 PM.** Details related to the tender can be obtained from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in or the above office can be obtained during office hours.

Sd/-
Section Officer,
State Election Commission, Karnataka

DIPR/CP/202/MAA/2026-27

Cong. MLAs offer prayers at Ram temple

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Over a dozen Congress legislators from Karnataka on Wednesday offered prayers at the Ram temple in Ayodhya, describing the visit as a "spiritually fulfilling experience."

The MLAs, who had been camping in the national capital for the past two days to meet the party's Central leadership regarding a possible Cabinet reshuffle, travelled to Ayodhya on Wednesday.

Former Minister T.B. Jayachandra said the visit was memorable.

Government of Karnataka
Office of the Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Division Ballari
Email: ee_pwdbellary@yahoo.com Telephone No: 08392 -266123

No: EE/PWD/BD/TS-1/2026-27/169 **Dated : 13/04/2026**

Short term Tender Notification (Two Cover Sysytem)

The Executive Engineer, Public works Department Division, Ballari invites the tenders for the works detailed in the table from the eligible contractors registered in Karnataka Public Works Department, through KPP- portal. Two cover tender procedure as per KTPP Act shall be followed. The tender documents can be downloaded through the web-site https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ For any additional information the tenderers may contact the office of the undersigned during office working hours.**TABLE**

Sl No	Details of Works	Amount of Estimate (Rs. in Lakhs)
1)	PWD/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT35251	500.00
2)	PWD/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT35594	500.00
3)	PWD/2026-27/RD/WORK_INDENT35598	300.00
4)	PWD/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT35590	310.00
5)	PWD/2025-26/BR/WORK_INDENT34347	600.00

Note : Any changes either in tender dates or any other conditions, tenderers can view in KPP_Procurement Portal.
1)Last dates for queries (through KPP –portal): **16-04-2026 upto 12.00 Hours**
2)Last date for submission of tenders through KPP -portal: **21-04-2026 upto 16.00 Hours**
3)Date and time of opening of Technical Bids: **22-04-2026 at 16.30 Hours in the office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Ballari.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
PWD Division, Ballari.

DIPR/Ballari/2026-27/KSMCA/RO No/54

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

HOMAGE

January 8,1935 — April 12, 2026

Dr. Chalasani Radhakrishna

Past President of Indian Medical Association (Hyderabad North), awardee of "Leading Professionals of the world" by Cambridge University, U.K., "Eminent citizen of India" and many more.

"In memory of a life so beautifully lived...
a heart so deeply loved"
a distinguished Doctor, a patient listener,
a true humanitarian, loved beyond words.

Smt. Hemalatha Chalasani
Sridhar & Sujini Chalasani
Sridevi & Murthy Nekkanti
Radhika & Gnyandeep Kantipudi
and his beloved Grandchildren

"Chalasani House", 1133, Srinagar Colony, Hyderabad-500 073

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

98th BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

Smt.T.K.D. SAROJA
16.04.1928 - 15.01.2022
Wife of late
Sri.T.K. Duraiswami,
Retd. Sr. Accounts Officer,
AG's Office, Madras,
(Prathama Acharya Purusha, T.T.D.), Daughter of
late Smt.M S Pattammal and
late Sri.M Singarachari,
Advocate, Chittoor (A.P.)

Fondly remembered by :
Smt.Vijaya & Sri.N.S. Mohanram
Smt.Vatsala & Sri.V A Raghu
Sri.T.K. Balaji & Smt.Sheela Balaji
Smt.Mala & Sri.S. Ramakrishnan
Brothers-in-Law
Sisters-in-Law

Grand Children,
Great Grand Children &
Great Great Grand Children

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES

To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:
Bengaluru: 98455 29981, 080 - 22071826
Hubballi: 0836 - 2338600
Mangaluru: 0824 - 2417575, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
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Extra line: Rs. 160/-
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Colour Display: Rs. 105/- per sq.cm
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DONATE EYES - GIFT SIGHT

Udhayanidhi's assets: HC seeks I-T reply by April 20

Mohamed Imranullah S.
CHENNAI

The Madras High Court, on Wednesday, sought the response of the Director General of Income Tax (Investigation) following the filing of a writ petition seeking an inquiry into alleged material discrepancies in the assets declared by Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin during the 2021 Assembly polls and for the elections scheduled for April 23 this year.

First Division Bench of Chief Justice Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari and Justice G. Arul Murugan asked Additional Solicitor General AR.L. Sundaresan, assisted by Income Tax department senior standing counsel A.P. Srinivas, to ensure that the DGIT's response was filed by April 20, as the petitioner had insisted that voters must know about the true assets of every candidate before the day of polling.

The court also permitted Central government senior panel counsel V. Chandrasekaran to accept notice on behalf of the Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs, and ordered notices, returnable by April 20, to Mr. Udhayanidhi, Red Giant Movies Private Limited and Snow Housing Private Limited.

Senior counsel V. Raghavachari argued the case on behalf of writ petitioner R. Kumaravel, 56, of Chepauk-Thiruvallikeni constituency, from where Mr. Udhayanidhi is contesting for the second consecutive time.

Five killed, 15 injured as blast rips through house in A.P.

Explosion took place at a road construction worker's residence, where four detonators were stored; most of the injured are neighbours who rushed to douse a minor fire that broke out first

The Hindu Bureau
KADIRI

Five persons were killed and 15 others critically injured after an explosion rocked a house and its neighbourhood at Kummaravandlapalle village in Sri Sathya Sai district of Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday.

The explosion took place at the residence of a road construction worker, where four detonators had been reportedly stored.

"It is not clear whether the detonators or the LPG cylinder in the house went off first. The sequence of events is under investigation," the police said.

Superintendent of Police S. Satish Kumar, who rushed to the spot, said four members of the family noticed a minor fire in the house around noon. They immediately rushed out and called the neighbours for help. As people gathered and tried to douse the flames, a blast occurred, leading to the casualties, he said.

Police personnel inspecting the blast site at Kummaravandlapalle village in Sri Sathya Sai district on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The deceased were identified as Viswanath Reddy, Mabunni, Madhu, Aslam Basha, and Fakruddin.

"There is some brisk activity on road-related work in the vicinity, and the police will examine that angle too," Mr. Kumar said. Contractors and workers were likely to be questioned. Clues and forensic teams were pressed into service, he said.

District Collector Shyam Prasad instructed the medical teams to provide advanced treatment to the injured. Residents and police first rushed the to the government hospital in Kadiri, about two km away. Doctors said some of the injured were later shifted to hospitals in Penukonda, Puttaparthi, and Anantapur.

Modi holds roadshow in Nagercoil

The Hindu Bureau
NAGERCOIL

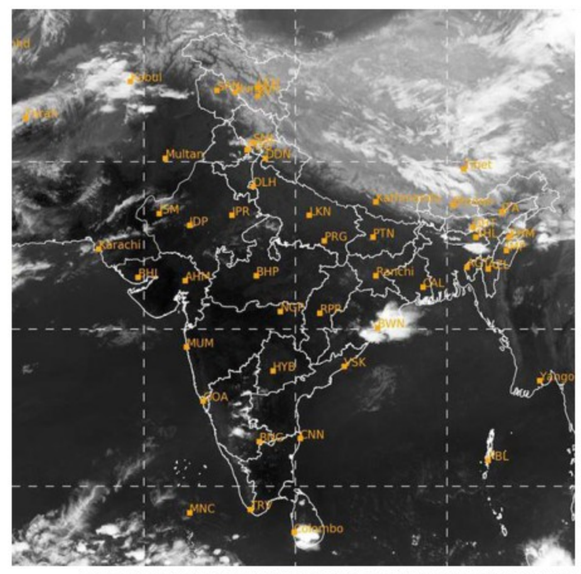
Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a roadshow at Nagercoil in Kanniyakumari district on Wednesday evening. Though Mr. Modi had visited Kanniyakumari during the previous elections, this marked his first roadshow in the district. BJP cadre turned up in large numbers despite the sultry weather.

The Prime Minister arrived at the Armed Reserve campground in Maravankudiyiruppu by helicopter, and started the roadshow from Veppamoodu at 4:35 p.m.

He was accompanied by AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami, BJP State president Nainar Nagenthran, BJP leader K. Annamalai and former Union Minister Pon Radhakrishnan.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim, West Bengal, Odisha and Karnataka. Hot and humid weather likely at isolated places over Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Kerala

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	35.0	26.6	Kozhikode	—	37.0	29.0
Ahmedabad	—	40.7	27.0	Kurnool	—	42.9	30.2
Aizawl	21	32.8	16.5	Lucknow	—	39.3	21.4
Allahabad	—	43.0	21.8	Madurai	—	40.2	26.2
Bengaluru	—	35.8	23.6	Mangaluru	—	34.8	27.0
Bhopal	—	39.5	20.8	Mumbai	—	34.5	24.6
Bhubaneswar	—	35.9	26.9	Mysuru	—	36.2	21.4
Chandigarh	—	36.8	16.4	New Delhi	—	39.1	19.4
Chennai	—	37.7	27.6	Patna	—	38.9	22.8
Coimbatore	—	38.6	24.9	Port Blair	—	32.3	25.2
Dehradun	—	35.4	16.7	Puducherry	—	35.2	26.4
Gangtok	9	16.0	12.5	Pune	—	41.8	24.0
Goa	—	34.2	26.6	Raipur	—	41.7	27.3
Guwahati	—	29.1	21.5	Ranchi	—	37.8	19.0
Hubballi	—	38.0	22.0	Shillong	—	24.5	13.9
Hyderabad	—	40.6	27.4	Shimla	—	27.0	13.0
Imphal	13	29.0	17.5	Srinagar	—	26.8	7.6
Jaipur	—	39.2	28.2	Thiruvananthapuram	—	35.8	27.1
Kochi	—	33.2	28.2	Tiruchi	—	40.1	25.6
Kohima	—	23.0	13.0	Vijayawada	—	38.2	25.8
Kolkata	—	36.4	26.5	Visakhapatnam	—	32.9	27.5

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.91	.86	.28	107	113	
Bengaluru	.24	.28	.25	52	109	
Chennai	.17	6	.41	14	36	
Delhi	.32	100	.41	241	294	
Hyderabad	.13	.13	.36	60	83	
Kolkata	7	.42	.37	71	71	
Lucknow	.17	.53	.54	76	120	
Mumbai	1	.27	.36	54	119	
Pune	—	.29	103	66	97	
Visakhapatnam	.51	.50	.21	35	128	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 296 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Bhiwani, Haryana recorded a healthy AQI score of 30

Air Quality Code: Poor, Moderate, Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Entry of 'fertile women' antithetical to the identity of Sabarimala deity, says temple board in top court

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said everybody is entitled to their individual conscience and no religion is superior to the other, even as the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) argued that the entry of "fertile women" between 10 and 50 years of age would be antithetical to the very manifestation and identity of the "special deity" at the Sabarimala temple in Kerala.

Appearing before a nine-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, for the TDB (which manages the shrine), said there were about 1,000 temples dedicated to Lord Ayyappa in India. The shrine at Sabarimala was the only one with the deity in the form of a *Naishtika Brahmachari* (perennial celibate).

Mr. Singhvi argued that the very foundation of the fame and prowess of the deity lay in the fact that Lord Ayyappa was in the *Naishtika Brahmachari* form. "The only reason people revere him is that he has eschewed all forms of *grihastashram* and embraced penance of a very high order. Worshippers observe *vratham*," Mr. Singhvi submitted.

He denied that women were excluded in toto. He said a "sub-classification" of women, that is, those aged between 10 years and 50 years, could not take the Sabarimala pilgrimage.

The day-long hearing saw Justice B.V. Nagarathna orally observe that Article 25(2)(a) of the Constitution required "religious practices" to be left untouched. "You can regulate anything but a religious practice," she remarked.

She said Article 25 (freedom of conscience and religion) invoked equality for all religions. "No religion is superior to the other. Persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience. The truth is one. Scholars interpret it in different ways. That is why everybody is entitled to their individual conscience. Article 25 (1) recognises that no path or conscience is superior to any other path or conscience... You may follow any path you wish," Justice Nagarathna said.

TO ADVERTISE CONTACT
THE HINDU
19 & 21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Jain Road, (Infantry Road), Bengaluru - 560 001
CALL: 98455 29981 / 080 - 22071826 / 22071827

दिल्ली प्रौद्योगिकी विश्वविद्यालय
DELHI TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
Established by Govt. of Delhi vide Act 6 of 2009
(Formerly Delhi College of Engineering)
Shahbad Daulatpur, Bawana Road, Delhi-110042

ADMISSION NOTICE FOR B.DES & M.DES PROGRAMME 2026-27

Delhi Technological University invites applications for its Bachelor of Design Programme (B.Des) & Master of Design Programme (M.Des) for the academic session 2026-27. Application form for admission is to be filled online w.e.f. 16.04.2026 (Thursday) at 10:00 AM onwards till 15.05.2025 (Friday) 23:59 midnight through the University's website: **www.dtu.ac.in**.

Admission guidelines may be downloaded from the University website **www.dtu.ac.in**. For any query please mail to **bdes_admission@dtu.ac.in** for B.Des admission and **mdes_admission@dtu.ac.in** for M.Des admissions or contact at 011-27871017

-Sd/-
Registrar

RAMAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Bengaluru – 560080

ADVT. No. PhD ADMISSION / 2026 / 01

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For details, please visit:
https://www.rri.res.in/careers/phd-programme

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Only through kpp portal)

BWSSB invites tenders from registered Agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (Central), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore-560 009.

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount put to tender / EMD Amount	Last date & time for receipt of tender	Date & time for opening of tender
1	Central-4	BWSSB/EE(C-4)/ PB/16/2026-27 Date: 10.04.2026	Rs.38.10 Lakhs / Rs.0.76 Lakhs	22.04.2026 upto 4.00 pm	23.04.2026 at 4.00 pm

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Central-4)

Office of the Chief Engineer (West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore-560 009.

2	West-4	BWSSB/EE(W-4)/ TO/PB/24/2026-27 Date: 15.04.2026 (3rd Call)	Rs.65,28.649/- / Rs.1,30,600/-	27.04.2026 upto 3.00 pm	29.04.2026 after 3.00 pm

Sd/- Executive Engineer (West-4)

Office of the Chief Engineer (Design-QA), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore-560 009.

3	Buildings	BWSSB/EE(Building)/ PB/24/2025-26 Date: 10.04.2026 (2nd Call)	Rs.15,40,287/- / Rs.38,508/-	23.04.2026 upto 4.00 pm	24.04.2026 after 4.00 pm

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Buildings)

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**. For further details contact the undersigned office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/190/AKAR/2026-27

ಆದಿಕವಿ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹರ್ಷಿ ವಾಲ್ಮೀಕಿ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯ ರಾಯಚೂರು
Adikavi Shri Maharshi Valmiki University, Raichur
ಕೃಷ್ಣ –ತುಂಗ ಆವರಣ, ಮಂತ್ರಾಲಯ ರಸ್ತೆ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಹೆದ್ದಾರಿ–167
ಯರಗೇರಾ – 584 133, ರಾಯಚೂರು, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ

No: ASMVUR/RE/TENDER/EOI/2025-26/18 Date:08/04/26

NOTIFICATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)
(FOR DETERMINATION OF SERVICE RATES)

The Registrar (Evaluation), Adikavi Sri Maharshi Valmiki University, Raichur, invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from eligible Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), Authorized Dealers, or System Integrators for the purpose of Rate Arrival/ Discovery for the following project: "Comprehensive Cybersecurity Solutions for University IT Infrastructure & Applications (Examination Section)" FOR More Technical information Visit Https://Raichuruniversity.Ac.In May Contact Registrarrurev@gmail.com Note: If any changes in the tender, it will be published portal only

Sd/- Registrar (Evaluation)
Adikavi Shri Maharshi Valmiki University, Raichur

DIP/RCR/16/KSMC&A/18/2026-27

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MINOR IRRIGATION & GROUND WATER DEVELOPMENT, DIVISION, DHARWAD

SECTION 1: INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT)
(Two Cover System), KW-1,2,3,4
Reg : This office tender Notification No. 01/2026-27 Dated:13.04.2026

The Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Division, Dharwad, invites tenders for **Dharwad, Gadag, Hangal and Ranebennur** Sub Division, comes under this undersigned office in Standard Bid Document KW-1,2,3,4 through e-procurement portal of the Government of Karnataka, viz., https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from eligible contractors for the work under various Head of Accounton Turn Key and Item Rate Bases. Maximum Estimate Amount: Rs.700.00 Lakhs, Maximum E.M.D amount Rs.10.50 Lakhs and Minimum Estimate Amount: Rs.1.00 Lakhs, Minimum E.M.D amount Rs.2500.00 Period of downloading tender documents from e-procurement portal is from 15/04/2026 upto 30 Days step by step. And any other Corrigendum/Addendum and Postponement of Notification, Changes in the dates, if any will be published only through **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**. Other details may be obtained from the office of the undersigned during office hours on all working days. Details published on the e-procurement website @ **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** are final.

Sd/- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
M.I & G.W.D. DIVISION, DHARWAD

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar
Bengaluru - 560 009. Phone No. 080-22265383, website: www.kiadb.in

No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-04/178/2026-27 Date: 15.04.2026

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item Rate Tenders under two cover bid system are invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors (Civil / Electrical) who have got adequate financial resources, state of the art technology, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the works as per the schedule given below:

Name of the Works : (1) Strengthening of 12.00 m wide road adjacent to plot no. 22C & D, 8, 9 & 10 allotted to GTTC College & Construction of RCC Box Drain in sublayout at Haralapura Industrial Area, Harihara Taluk, Davanagere District. **(ST). (2nd Call).**

(2) Formation of 12.00 mtr wide road and construction of RCC box drain, RCC Box culvert including providing HDPE water supply pipeline in sublayout in plot no. 90 at Hanagawadi 2nd stage Industrial Area, Harihara Taluk, Davanagere District. **(SC). (2nd Call).**

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **29.04.2026** upto **4.00 pm.**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/199/Zen/2026-27

Government of Karnataka
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, CHAMARAJANAGARA DIVISION, CHAMARAJANAGARA
Phone/Fax : 08226-295048 e-mail : eecnr@kpwd.gov.in / pwdeechngr@gmail.com

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through Kppp.karnataka.gov.in portal only)
(Two Cover System : Section-1-Technical Bid and Section-2-Financial Bid)
Short Term Tender Notification No 04/2026-27 Dated : 10-04-2026

Item rate tenders are invited through Kppp.karnataka.gov.in portal only on behalf of Governor of Karnataka from Eligible registered civil Contractor in KPWD in Standard Bid document **KW-4** form The Total no of works is 9, **H/A : 5054-80-190-0-01-132 KRIDL Works** Minimum estimated cost is Rs. 120.00 lakhs, maximum estimated cost is Rs. 650.00 lakhs, Further changes in this Notification will be published in Kppp.karnataka.gov.in Only. Date of events as follows:

1	Date and Time for downloading the tender document from the Kppp.karnataka.gov.in portal	From 13-04-2026 to 24-04-2026 upto 16.30 Hrs.
2	Pre-Bid Meeting Date	17-04-2026 in Division Office Meeting Hall at 11.00 AM
3	Downloading the tender document from the Last Date and Time	24-04-2026 upto 16.30 Hrs.
4	Date & Time for opening of Technical bid	25-04-2026 after 16.30 Hrs.
5	Date & Time for opening of Financial bid	28-04-2026 after 16.30 Hrs

More information can be had from the web site : **https ://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** & Any other details required can be obtained from office of the under signed during office hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
PWD Division, Chamarajanagar.

No. : DIPR : CHANAGAR:39:2026-27

KARNATAKA CO-OPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS' FEDERATION LIMITED
KMF Complex, Dr. M.H. Marigowda Road, DRC Post, Bengaluru-560 029.
Tel: 080-25536625 / 25536789 fax: 080-25536105 E-mail: kmfengg@gmail.com

IFT No: KMF/ENGG/ DD/SFM/ 02210/2026-27 Date: 15-04-2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
[Two cover System] [Through KPP Portal only]

Karnataka Milk Federation Ltd; Bengaluru invites short term tender from the eligible manufacturers/ authorised dealer through KPP Portal for the works mentioned in the table below. The interested manufacturers /Suppliers who have handled similar kind of works may participate in the tender as indicated below, by logging on to website **https://www.kppp.karantaka.gov.in** and also contact **Help desk E-mail; hphelpdesk.blr@intarvo.com and helpline no. 080-25501227/ 25501216.**

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Qty.	EMD (Rs.)	Period of Completion
1	Supply, Installation and Commissioning of SFM Packing of Bottle Filling Machine with accessories & related works at Dempo Dairy Asangi.	1 Job	2,10,000/-	6 months

1. Tender schedules may be downloaded from dated: **17-04-2026 to 24-04-2026 up to 4.00 PM. 2.** Pre Bid Meeting date: 21-04-2026 At 11.30 AM. **3.** Last date for Tender submission on date: **24-04-2026 up to 4.00 PM. 4.** Tender [Part 1] to be opened on date: **28-04-2026 at 4:30 PM.** Hence forth changes / modification in the tender, It will be uploaded on KPPP portal only.

For Karnataka Milk Federation Limited
Sd/- Director [Engineering-2]

Dry days

As India faces a rainfall deficit, it must make preparations for the worst

After the crest, the trough is inevitable. Following two years of surplus rainfall, India is likely staring at a significant shortfall in the coming monsoon. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) in its April forecast has predicted an 8% deficit, or "below normal" rainfall, coming June-September. There is a five percent margin of error in this estimate but going by IMD's track record, there are many more times it has expected a 'normal' monsoon only for India to end up with a drought than it has forecast a drought and been proved wrong. In fact, when IMD warns of a deficit in April, history shows that India often experiences a drought. The agency, in its official lexicon, never uses the term 'drought' and only refers to a deficit below 90% as "deficient." In the April of 2015, IMD issued a "below normal monsoon" forecast for the 2015 southwest monsoon season, predicting seasonal rainfall at 93% of the long-term average, again, 'below normal.' India ended up much worse at 86% Long Period Average (LPA). IMD expects a depressed monsoon this time in the second crucial half of the monsoon (August and September) on the back of weather models indicating an El Nino, the cyclical phenomenon where a heating of the central equatorial Pacific Ocean beyond 1 degree Celsius has corresponded nine out 16 times since 1950 to a deficient monsoon.

The timing of an El Nino matters. If the temperature rise happens outside of the monsoon months, its impact on the monsoon is not as threatening. In 2019, for instance, the IMD expected less than normal rainfall in April because El Nino-like conditions were on the horizon. Paradoxically, India ended up with above normal rainfall because that heating was not as strong as expected. This year too, the IMD expects the Indian Ocean Diapole would counter the desiccating impact of the El Nino. In a year where the most concerning clouds as of now are the war-like ones over West Asia, shortage of gas and fertilizer could worsen farmer sentiment on top of the weak rains. The government should immediately begin preparations to shore up fertilizer stocks, equitable water distribution, particularly in reservoirs that are likely to be stressed, and provide timely advisories to farmers on optimal sowing practices.

Devious menace

Loan apps function in a regulatory dark area and promise easy credit

In the case of Nithin Raj, the first-year dental student in Kannur who died last week after falling from atop a five-storey building, the police have identified harassment over a loan that he secured via an app as a contributing factor. His death is the third high-profile suicide linked to loan apps in Kerala within four months. Since January, over 35 complaints related to these apps have been registered in Thiruvananthapuram Rural alone. In Raj's case, parallel investigations are also probing allegations of caste-based discrimination at his college and the National Commission for Scheduled Castes has sought a report from the State police in under a week. Once installed, these apps extract contact lists, photo galleries, and GPS data from the user's device and export them to servers often located in North India or overseas. If repayment is delayed, recovery agents steadily ramp up harassment, including repeated abusive calls to the borrower, harassing persons listed as references on the loan application, and inflicting reputational damage. Kerala in particular has high smartphone penetration and digital literacy, but not necessarily financial literacy, and a large student population with urgent small-credit needs. Despite the RBI's Digital Lending Guidelines, predatory apps lend without regulated status, fabricate Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) partnerships, route funds through opaque gateways, conceal fees and disbursal deductions, and provide no grievance mechanism.

The apps are able to operate because while the RBI regulates financial entities, the harmful entity operates in the app and data layers. As a first step, smartphone makers must consider an OS-level sandbox in which any app categorised as "financial" is technically barred from accessing contacts, photos, etc., even if the user grants permission. The apps' call centres are also often traced to other States or countries, beyond the reach of local police. Second, India needs to enact legislation with prison sentences and heavy fines for illegal digital lending. When an app is removed from a store or directory, its developers relaunch immediately under new names. Third, the government can mandate all financial apps to have a cryptographically signed certificate of association from a regulated bank or NBFC and app stores to check listings against a Reserve Bank of India whitelist. This is also why the Kerala government is mulling new legislation to regulate digital lending platforms and empower local police to act against apps operating from outside the State. Fourth, the country needs rigorous disclosure standards on effective interest rates and fees, strict rules on recovery conduct, stricter KYC (Know your Customer) obligations on payment aggregators, and risk flags on UPI IDs associated with lending operations associated with a high complaint rate.

A curated selection of articles on the Editorial and Opinion pages on women's reservation and delimitation

Women's reservation and delimitation should be delinked

Brinda Karat

is a senior leader of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

Parliament is scheduled to discuss two far reaching Bills ostensibly for the implementation of the one-third reservation of seats for women in Parliament and State Assemblies. The Bills are the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill which seeks to raise the number of seats in Parliament to 850 seats with one-third reserved for women "after an exercise of delimitation is undertaken for this purpose", and The Delimitation Bill, 2026, which sets up the Delimitation Commission to redraw boundaries of existing seats on the basis of the "latest Census figures published on the date of the constitution of the commission", which is the 2011 Census. The government expects the Opposition to turn itself into a rubber stamp and approve utterly flawed proposals or be damned as being anti-women.

Unnecessary linkages

In September 2023, to blunt mounting criticism of its failure to legislate on women's reservation, the government hastily pushed through the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (NSVA) in a so-called "special session", just months before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. This legislation was markedly different from the Bill which had been adopted by the Rajya Sabha in 2010. If that Bill, which had gone through several rounds of parliamentary scrutiny, had been presented by the government, as it should have been, women's reservation could have been implemented from the 2024 elections itself. Instead, the Modi government, through the NSVA, linked women's reservation to the proposed Census and delimitation. During the ensuing debate almost all Opposition parties expressed concern that these unnecessary linkages would not only deny women the right of reservation in the 2024 Lok Sabha and subsequent Assembly elections but would put its implementation in limbo contingent on other factors. The government responded that Opposition fears were unfounded and that a Delimitation Commission would be set up after the 2024 elections and that the Census would be completed in time. None of this happened.

What did happen is that the number of women in Parliament after the 2024 elections decreased from 78 to 74 which is just 13.6% of the total House. Additionally, in 2024 and 2025, State Assembly elections were held in 10 States with a total of 1,276 assembly seats. Only 123 women, which is less than 10%, were elected. This is the real consequence of the unwarranted linkages introduced by the government.

The 131st Amendment Bill not only retains the flawed linkages of the NSVA, it adds a third linkage of increased seats. Thus in the name of women's reservation, the government wants to achieve three aims – first, it wants to scrap the principle of delimitation based on present population criteria by using the outdated 2011 Census as the base; secondly, by using the 2011 Census, it wants to take pressure off the urgency for a caste census; and finally, it wants women's reservation to be implemented only as part of a delimitation exercise whose aim is to redraw boundaries of seats to suit the ruling regime. That is, women's reservation is once again being held hostage to the fulfilment of other agendas.

Women's reservation is a stand-alone step which requires a stand-alone law

The importance of Census data

Till now in India, all the four major national exercises of delimitation of the boundaries of seats have been based on the last available Census data. The number of Scheduled Castes (SC)/Scheduled Tribes (ST) reserved seats are based on the proportion of SC/ST communities in the total population. As per the 1971 Census, the absolute number of seats reserved for SCs and STs was 79 and 41 respectively. This increased by 11 seats after the 2001 Census and subsequent delimitation with 84 seats reserved for SCs and 47 for STs with their combined proportion in the population being 24.4%. From 2001 to 2026, the population would certainly have registered a bigger increase. In the name of urgency for women's reservation, implementing a delimitation exercise which ignores the current population of SCs and STs will be a *manuvadi* injustice to oppressed communities, denying them a fair increase in the proportion of reserved seats. It will negatively impact the women of these communities, since the numbers of seats constituting one-third of reserved seats for SC/ST women will also be less than their rightful share.

Delimitation is a highly politically and sensitive issue. The last national delimitation exercise took around six years to complete, from 2002 to 2008, and was implemented in the 2009 elections. Since then, two State-level delimitation exercises have been done for Assam and J&K, directly under the Election Commission of India. Both of these have been strongly criticised for the highly undemocratic and sectarian way in which the boundaries of the seats were redrawn violating the principles of the Delimitation Act, 2002. To put it plainly, in both States the interests of the central ruling regime were advanced by manipulating the creation of seats in such a way as to minimise the impact of voters of particular communities seen as being opposed to the ruling regime. It can be reasonably anticipated that the coming delimitation will be highly contested. Why should women's reservation be linked to such an exercise? Further, even if the proportion of the present number of seats in different States is to be maintained according to the present government proposal, questions still remain as to the disadvantages of States where population growth is less. All this needs further discussion and cannot be pushed through.

Betrayal of women's reservation

Women's reservation is a stand-alone step which requires a stand-alone law. The 2010 Bill adopted by the Rajya Sabha and supported by the then Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had no such linkages. I remember Sushma Swaraj, then the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, rushing to congratulate us, then in the Upper House, for the historic passage of the Bill even though she knew that her party would get no credit. But there are no women leaders in the BJP today who would have the courage to call the government out for this; the second betrayal of the women's reservation issue. The only reason that the government is insisting on such a linkage is because it wants to rush through the delimitation process in the name of implementing women's reservation. The onus of delay will be shifted to all those who object to the delimitation boundaries suggested by a Commission packed with government supporters which is what the composition of the proposed Bill suggests.

It is time to say no to the instrumentalisation of the issue of women's reservation. Women's reservation has been fought for by millions of women across India, for decades, to strengthen democracy, not by the denial of rights of SCs and STs and not by bulldozing democratic norms. Those committed to women's reservation must vote against these Bills. The solution lies in going back to the 2010 Bill without linkages to delimitation and the Census. A simple amendment to the 106 Constitution Amendment law passed in 2023 will suffice: in Clause 334A, delete the sentence, one-third reservation for women will commence "after an exercise of delimitation is undertaken for this purpose after the relevant figures for the first census taken after commencement of the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-eighth Amendment) Act, 2023 have been published". This will break the link. As far as increase of seats and delimitation is concerned, these are separate issues which should be discussed. As and when Parliament decides on an increase in seats, automatically the framework of women's reservation too will change. Our message to the government is: stop your manipulations, one-third reservation for women without linkages now.

Implications of increasing the size of the Lok Sabha

M.R. Madhavan

Co-founder and President of PRS Legislative Research

The government has circulated a set of three Bills related to delimitation and women's reservation. These Bills are expected to be taken up in the extended Budget session from April 16-18, and could affect the working of Parliament in several ways. The Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill proposes the following. The limit on the size of the Lok Sabha will be increased from 550 to 850. The number of seats for each State in the Lok Sabha will be based on its proportion in the population of all States. This population will be based on such Census (not necessarily the latest) that is specified by Parliament by passing a law. The Bill also clarifies that the reservation of one-third of seats for women will be effective after a delimitation, and will be valid for 15 years. The Delimitation Bill sets up a Delimitation Commission, and its provisions are similar to the last one set up in 2002. Importantly, it requires the latest published Census to be used. Therefore, the next delimitation is proposed to be based on the 2011 Census. The third Bill extends these provisions to the three Union Territories with legislatures: Delhi, J&K, and Puducherry.

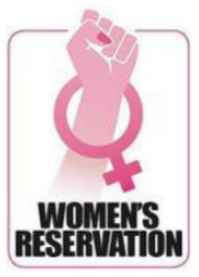
Huge impact

There are several implications of these proposals. First, the freezing of seats until the first Census after 2026 has been removed. Instead, seats will be decided based on the 2011 Census. An immediate implication is that the relative share of seats in the Lok Sabha for each State will change. The biggest losers are Kerala and Tamil Nadu, while the main gainers are Rajasthan, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. While the proposal will equalise the value of the vote of every citizen regardless of their State of residence, it will lead to MPs from U.P. and Bihar (25% of total seats, up from 22%) having significant power to shape national policy.

Second, the Constitution Amendment Bill provides Parliament the flexibility to determine the periodicity of delimitation and the Census that will be used for the purpose. Currently, the Constitution requires delimitation after every Census, and to be based on that Census (currently, there is a freeze on this until 2026). The Amendment requires just a simple majority to determine whether to do delimitation, and which Census to use. The government of the day, as it would command the majority in the Lok Sabha, can effectively make this decision. They would need to pass it in the Rajya Sabha too, but that House will be weakened by the same Bill, which brings us to the third implication. While the size of the Lok Sabha is being increased, there is no proposal to change the size of the Rajya Sabha. This affects the relative importance of the two Houses. For example, if the two Houses disagree on a Bill, the President may summon a joint sitting. In such a scenario, each member of Parliament has one vote, so the Lok Sabha with 543 seats has 2.2 times the votes of the Rajya Sabha with 245 seats. If we assume that the Lok Sabha will now have 815 seats (an increase of 50%), it will have 3.3 times the strength of the Rajya Sabha. The effect can be seen with an example. Say, the government has 53% seats in the Lok Sabha (433 out of 815) and just 40% in the Rajya Sabha (98 out of 245 seats). The government will still be able to get its Bills through a joint session as it has a majority of total seats. This imbalance will also play out in elections to the offices of the President and the Vice-President, where each MP across both Houses has an equal vote.

These Bills will have significant impact on the composition of Parliament and its functioning, and are being introduced with no public discussion

A fourth implication is that the limit on the size of the Council of Ministers will increase. The Constitution was amended in 2003 to limit the Council's size to 15% of the Lok Sabha. If Lok Sabha is expanded to have 815 MPs, the limit on the size of the Central cabinet also increases from 81 to 122. Fifth, the increased size of the Lok Sabha reduces the opportunity for an MP to participate in the deliberations of the House. MPs ask questions to Ministers to hold them to account, and raise important issues in the zero hour. Questions and zero hour interventions are chosen by lottery, and an increased size of the Lok Sabha reduces the probability of getting balloted. The issue is exacerbated by the fact that Parliament sits for less than 70 days a year.



Global precedents

Other countries also have large legislatures. For example, the U.K. House of Commons has 650 members. It has evolved processes to provide opportunities to MPs to participate in discussions. It averages over 150 sittings a year, and also has a robust committee system. Parliamentary committees can supplement deliberations. However, the Indian Parliament is found lacking in this respect. For example, every Bill in the U.K. Parliament has to be examined by committees of both Houses. In India, less than a fifth of the Bills are referred to Committees.

Sixth, there could be a similar impact on State legislatures. Though these Bills do not have any provisions regarding the size of State legislatures, that decision will be taken by the Delimitation Commission. If they decide to follow the same rationale and increase the size by 50%, some States could have oversized legislatures. U.P. could end up having over 600 seats while West Bengal and Maharashtra could reach about 450.

These Bills will have significant impact on the composition of Parliament and its functioning, and are being introduced with no public discussion. It is imperative that such Bills go through intensive deliberation, both outside and inside Parliament. At the very least, they should be referred to a parliamentary committee, which can engage with experts and the wider public before giving its recommendations.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Enact reservation now

Thirty years. That is how long Indian women have been waiting for this moment. Thirty years of promises and political calculations that always found reasons to push women's representation to the next session, the next government. The Women's Reservation Bill was first introduced in 1996. Congress held power for a full decade after that. The Rajya Sabha passed the bill in 2010. And then, for four consecutive years, under a government that Sonia Gandhi herself chaired, the Bill was never brought to the Lok Sabha floor. Not once. She now calls PM Modi's urgency "extraordinary hurry" (Editorial page, April 13 — "Delimitation, and not women's reservation, is the issue"). Every party voted for the Adhiniyam in 2023. Now, as the government moves to make the reservation effective from 2029, the Congress has reversed each one of those positions. The urgency they demanded has become the mischief they condemn. The timeline they insisted upon has become the process they oppose. Sonia ji raises delimitation as her central concern. She is right that it deserves careful handling. No southern State should lose political ground because it responsibly controlled its population. PM Modi has given an explicit, on-record assurance that no State, including Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, or Telangana, will see a reduction in Lok Sabha seats. The 2011 Census, the last verified count, forms the basis for this exercise. This is not an assault on the Constitution. It is a correction of a delay. Then there is the OBC sub-quota question. It deserves a serious answer and will get one in time. But let us be honest about its history. The parties that raised it loudest between 1998-2010 were not making a social justice argument. They were running a delay operation.

Annpurna Devi
Union Minister for Women and Child Development

To read more letters online, scan the QR code.
Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Placing women at the core of democracy

Vandana Mishra

Professor, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University

For decades, the need for making women agents of empowerment rather than just recipients of welfare has been acknowledged and discussed by various governments. But the credit for bringing on board all dissenting and delaying voices goes to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who, by passing the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (or Women's Reservation Act) 2023 has established a milestone in India's constitutional trajectory. The legislation guarantees 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and the State Legislatures, but its significance goes far beyond the appeals of representation, equality, and inclusion. The lenses of institutional design, epistemic diversity, and developmental rationality establish this Act as a remarkable structural innovation in Indian democracy, which will go a long way in reaffirming that the reform is aimed not merely at reservation but also at the very intelligence and resilience of our constitutional order.

There is no doubt that the Adhiniyam will function as a mechanism that deepens democracy. There will be an expansion of the social and perceptive base from which democracy draws political authority, thus further strengthening representative democracy. It will also broaden the state's decision-making intelligence by incorporating previously overlooked and ignored standpoints. Recruitment in Indian politics has been confined by politics of dynasty, caste, and networked masculinities. The Act has the potential to break this ecosystem and will force political parties to reorganise their structures and shift their focus from 'just getting elected' to 'searching and nurturing the talent that can be elected'. The increased numbers of women in legislatures will broaden the horizons of legislative debate in content, tone, and ethical range. Governance will become more effective when deliberations are informed by multiple experiences. Women legislators, drawing upon their distinctively lived social realities, are likely to articulate different conceptions of justice, liberty, and fairness. Domestic violence, childcare infrastructure, public sanitation, and access to public services will no longer be peripheral or 'soft issues' as they will be reasoned differently. This can be rightly understood as a shift from procedural democracy, where the focus is on structures, institutions, and processes, to deliberative democracy, where the focus is on collecting competing arguments and the quality of the process rather than its outcome.

This law also finds reasonable justification in the grammar of political economy. It ensures that policy making is informed by real lives rather than statistics alone. Over the decades, women have made their mark in India's informal economy. From agricultural labourers, self-help group leaders, and teachers to street vending and domestic work, women constitute the unacknowledged and hence uncounted macroeconomics of survival. When this dispersed expertise translates to formal decision making and policy formulation, it allows different stake-holders –political parties and the state – to listen to an entirely different set of micro-rationalities. The public policy discourse has already established that when decisions are made by those in the first line of consequence bearing, the feedback loop between the government and the citizenry shortens and becomes more effective.

The first challenge to implementing the law is institutional as it is chained to the timely completion of the Census and the delimitation ecosystem of politics, party organisation, and public discourse adapts to it. The centuries-old habits of thought, social hierarchies, inhibitions, and material constraints may resist or distort its content, thus delaying the democratic renewal. The first challenge is institutional as the Adhiniyam is chained to the timely completion of the Census and the delimitation of constituencies. It needs administrative readiness to translate the Act into action. Secondly, genuine reform would require redesigning internal political party structures so that women can be recruited at all operating levels. It calls for a realistic acceptance of them as co-political actors and not figurative placeholders. Parties also have to ensure that the voices not yet heard - of the marginalised as well as of the mainstreamed - do not remain excluded in practice. The challenge here is to not be consumed by the already existing and overtly active elitist political oligarchies. Thirdly, affective restructuring will be required because the institutions, which habitually display performative aggression, may instinctively look through the ideas of empathy and social reasoning. Fourthly, women themselves have to stand up to the constraints of social norms and gender roles which still limit their mobility, time, and autonomy. Fifthly, the Indian society must rise to the need of the hour. This entails a thorough reconfiguration of social attitudes to confer women the space, dignity, and respect essential for profound and autonomous engagement in public life.

The reform should be seen as a long process of political refinement wherein we must develop the habit of recognising, listening, and accommodating different perspectives as it will lead to intelligent policy making and deepening of democracy.

Administrative readiness

However, guaranteeing the Act's transformative potential will be a difficult nut to crack. It will largely depend on how well the

BJP's failed Christian outreach attempt

Union govt.'s push for amendments to FCRA Act deals the latest blow in Kerala

STATE OF PLAY

K.S. Sudhi
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Nothing seems to be working for the Kerala unit of the BJP, especially when it comes to the party's attempts to woo Christian voters. Its efforts to win over the Christians have backfired on multiple occasions and that too at defining political moments.

A series of force majeure events has spoiled the party's bid to win the trust of Christian voters, whom it considers essential to ending its electoral drought in the State. The latest in the series is the proposed amendments to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) pushed by the Union government, which are supposed to give wide-ranging powers to a government-appointed designated authority to take control of the assets and properties acquired using foreign contributions, in the event of failure to renew or cancellation of FCRA licence. The move came at a time when the State was heading for Assembly polls.

Though the Union government has put the amendments on the back burner, apparently under pressure from Kerala BJP leaders, the damage has already been done.

Various church factions have vociferously come out against the proposed amendments as they felt that the Union government was attempting to choke their financial supply lines and usurp their properties under the cover of the legislation. The statements of BJP leader Shon George that only those who are engaged in shady financial deals need to be worried about the proposed amendments and the

Church has no reason to be worried have not gone down well in the community.

The last few days witnessed the rickety relationship between the party and the community, which is a decisive voter segment in the State, reaching its lowest ebb with the reported call of some Church heads to the faithful to vote for the Congress-led United Democratic Front in the State through the community mouthpiece Deepika. The diatribe of Mr. Shon and his father P.C. George, BJP's candidates in Christian-dominated Poonjar and Pala Assembly constituencies, against some of the church heads, holding them accountable for campaigning in favour of the UDF has further strained the carefully mended relationship between the party and a section of Church heads.

Earlier, the arrests of Sister Preethi Mary and Sister Vandana Francis, two Kerala-based Catholic nuns belonging to the Assisi Sisters of Mary Immaculate on July 25, 2025, four months before the civic body polls, in Chhattisgarh on charges of forced religious conversion and human trafficking of a tribeswoman had set off a political storm.

While the Chhattisgarh unit of the party insisted that the nuns were involved in trafficking and forced conversion, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, the Kerala unit president, stood with the nuns as he had much to lose politically in the State.

A few months later, a Kerala priest and seven others were arrested in Amaravati in Maharashtra on December 30, 2025, again on allegations of forced religious conversion. The arrests, which invoked fierce criticisms from Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and State Congress leaders, came when all the political formations were busy engaged in the preparatory works for the upcoming Assembly polls. The BJP had to dispatch a team of its Christian leaders to Mumbai to liaise with the State government to secure their release.

The two instances had put the party leadership in a fix and forced it to go the extra mile to contain the damage caused by the allegations that Christian missionaries were being harassed in BJP-ruled northern States.

Similarly, the party's move to win the trust of Christian residents of Munambam, an alleged Waqf property, who were pitted against a few Muslim outfits demanding the restoration of alienated Waqf holdings, through the Waqf (Amendment) Act 2025, had failed to deliver desired results. Eventually, it was revealed that the amended Act could do little to solve the imbroglio.

Besides the impact of the failed outreach programmes, the party now also faces the bleak prospect of antagonising its core Hindu voters over its "minority appeasement measures." Many in the party consider Christians as the "natural vote bank" of the Congress and efforts to pursue them is futile.

The BJP may have to rework its social engineering strategies for creating a political space for itself in Kerala in the wake of these developments.

How proposed delimitation would redraw political map

On reallocation based on 2011 Census, southern and northeastern States stand to lose the most in seat share; Hindi-heartland States gain disproportionately

DATA POINT

Srinivasan Ramani
Sambavi Parthasarathy

If the Lok Sabha's strength is expanded to 850 and seats are allocated on the basis of the 2011 Census population, as the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill and the companion Delimitation Bill to be tabled in Parliament envisage, the southern States and the North-East would see a sharp erosion in their share of parliamentary representation, while the Hindi-heartland States of northern India would be the overwhelming beneficiaries.

The two Bills, to be introduced in Parliament from April 16, seek to do a) raise the Lok Sabha ceiling from 543 to 850 seats (815 from States, 35 from Union Territories), b) replace the constitutional freeze that pegged seat allocation to the 1971 Census with an open-ended formula allowing Parliament to choose the Census basis by ordinary law, and c) constitute a Delimitation Commission that would use the latest published Census, currently the 2011 Census, to redraw boundaries and reallocate seats. The stated purpose is to operationalise women's reservation under the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023.

It is to be noted that Home Minister Amit Shah said in Coimbatore in February 2025 that southern States would not lose a single seat on a "pro rata basis". Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal told *The Hindu* on April 13, 2026 that concerns about southern States were a "silly concern", asserting there would be a "proportional increase across the country".

However, the Bills contain no mechanism to guarantee existing seat proportions. Article 81(2)(a) mandates population-proportional allocation and not a uniform percentage increase. In other words, delimitation will be based on population proportion according to the latest available Census.

Who gains and who loses

Using 2011 Census population to allocate 850 seats proportionally and comparing against a uniform proportional increase (which preserves existing seat shares), the disparities become stark. The five States/UTs that gain the most seats compared to a proportional increase belong to the Hindi heartland. Four of the five States/UTs that lose the most belong to the South or the East. **(Table 1)**

Aggregated by region, the pattern is unmistakable. The Hindi heartland's (Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Delhi) share in the 850-seat House would rise from 38.1% to 43.1%. The South's share would fall from 24.3% to 20.7%. The North-East would decline from 4.4% to 3.8%. The Eastern States would slip from 14.4% to 13.7%. **(Table 2)**

The demographic roots of this asymmetry are visible in the latest fertility data. According to NFHS-5 (2019-21), all five southern States have total fertility rates between 1.5 and 1.8, well below the replacement level of 2.1 **(Chart 3)**. Bihar (3.0), Meghalaya (2.9), Uttar Pradesh (2.4), Jharkhand (2.3), and Manipur (2.2) remain above replacement. The gap that drove the original 1976 freeze on seat allocation has narrowed over the decades, but it persists.

States that invested in health, education, and family planning would see their share of parliamentary power shrink, while States that lagged on these indicators would gain the most. The data lays bare the core tension in the delimitation exercise: Article 81(2)(a) rewards demographic weight, not developmental achievement.

Revising representation

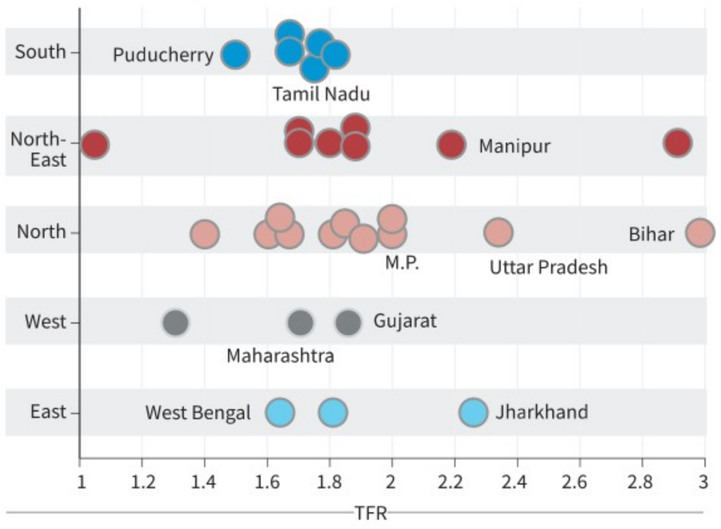
The data for the tables were sourced from Census of India, 2011; NFHS-5 (2019-21); Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026; Delimitation Bill, 2026

TABLE 2: Region-wise increase in seats, and region-wise share of seats in the current composition and as per the proposed delimitation exercise

Region	% increase in seats	As a share of 543 seats	As a share of 850 seats
East	48.7%	14.4%	13.7%
Hindi-heartland	76.8%	38.1%	43.1%
North-East	33.3%	4.4%	3.8%
North-non-Hindi	58.3%	4.4%	4.5%
South	33.3%	24.3%	20.7%
West	56.4%	14.4%	14.3%
Grand total	56.5%	100%	100%

The South's share in the post-delimitation Parliament will fall from 24.3% to 20.7%, while the Hindi heartland's share will rise from 38.1% to 43.1%

CHART 3: Total fertility rates (TFR) across various States



The data for chart-3 is based on NFHS-5 (2019-21). As shown in the chart, all five southern States have TFR between 1.5 and 1.8, below the replacement level of 2.1

Calculations by The Hindu Data Team

TABLE 1: The table shows seats gained/lost due to the proposed delimitation exercise based on Census 2011 population, when compared with that of a proportional increase in seats. In the table, red depicts States that could lose seats, blue shows those with gains

States/UTs	Change in seats
Uttar Pradesh	13
Maharashtra	3
Bihar	10
West Bengal	-2
Madhya Pradesh	5
Tamil Nadu	-11
Rajasthan	8
Karnataka	-2
Gujarat	2
Andhra Pradesh	-5
Odisha	-3
Telangana	-2
Kerala	-8
Jharkhand	1
Assam	0
Punjab	-1
Chhattisgarh	1
Haryana	2
Delhi	5
Jammu & Kashmir	3
Uttarakhand	-1
Himachal Pradesh	-1
Tripura	0
Meghalaya	-1
Manipur	-1
Nagaland	-1
Goa	-2
Arunachal Pradesh	-2
Puducherry	-1
Mizoram	-1
Chandigarh	-1
Sikkim	-1
Dadra & NH and Daman & Diu	-3
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	-1
Ladakh	-1
Lakshadweep	-1

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 16, 1976

Hotel-goers complain of decline in quality

Madras, April 15: Price reduction at the cost of quality and quantity. This is the complaint against the eatables supplied in hotels after the Government passed an order fixing prices of 10 popular dishes. Comments of hotel-goers were generally caustic–no flavour in coffee; sambar and chutney bad enough before are now worse devoid of any trace of dhal or coconut; onions dominated potatoes in "masala"; dosais are thinned out; iddlis, even though flattened and stale, are still scarce.

Iddlis and dosais served throughout the day in most of the hotels now make their appearance only for certain hours in the morning and evening. Pongal and medu vadai, dishes much sought after, are not available as before. The usual alibi flaunted is "sold out." Both the twin culinary supplements–sambar and chutney–served along with iddlis and dosais are no more together. Only sambar or chutney is now served and that too only once. Extra is simply billed. Besides, chillies predominated in chutney and tamarind in sambar, many consumers said.

Bachelors and those dependent on hotels, who were quite enthusiastic about price reduction, are the most disillusioned lot now.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 16, 1926

Efficiency of British railways

Rugby, April 15.: A large party of American hotel proprietors, who are now in England on the first stage of their European tour, are finding much to say in praise of British railways. Last night they travelled 189 miles from Manchester to London in 3¼ hours. The train at times reached a speed of 83 miles per hour and 60 miles per hour was averaged throughout the journey. A few days ago their journey from Plymouth to Paddington of 227 miles in a train weighing 273 tons in 2 hours 33 minutes, although beneath the record for the line, was a surprise to them.

It is explained that the high speed of British expresses, coupled with immunity from accidents, is mainly attributable to the quality of the rolling stock and of the permanent way. The Americans appear particularly impressed by the smooth running of the British trains.

From Page One

‘States seats will rise 50% after delimitation’

Asked how this position squares with the proposed amendments to the Constitution and the provisions of the Delimitation Bill, the functionary said everything would be explained during the parliamentary debate. “There is no change in the assurance given by the government that all States will have their number of seats in the Lok Sabha increased by 50%. If Tamil Nadu has 39, it will have 58; Kerala has 20 and it will have 30,” the functionary said, asking to wait for the mechanics of it to be explained in Parliament.

The drafts of the Bills have raised concerns that the States which have stabilised their population are set to lose their relative strength when the composition of the Lok Sabha is reapportioned between States as per the latest Census figures.

Iran threatens to close Red Sea traffic

Washington has sought to turn the screws on Tehran with the blockade, with U.S. Central Command saying that American forces “have completely halted economic trade going into and out of Iran by sea”.

Speaking to the *New York Post* on Tuesday, Mr. Trump said a new round of talks with Iran could take place in Pakistan “over the next two days”, while telling Fox Business the war was “very close to being over”. On the Iranian side, a Foreign Ministry spokesperson said “several messages” had been exchanged via Islamabad since the talks wrapped up on Sunday, while Tehran received a Pakistani delegation led by its Army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir on Wednesday.

INDIA bloc rejects delimitation move

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge reiterates Opposition’s stance that it is not against women’s reservation, but will not allow provisions in the amendment Bill to pass; Rahul Gandhi urges all MPs from the alliance to attend the Special Session, tells Trinamool that any absence will help BJP

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge with members of the INDIA bloc after a meeting in New Delhi on Wednesday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The Opposition Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) took a unanimous decision to vote against the delimitation provisions in the Constitution (131st) Amendment Bill, 2026, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said after a meeting of the alliance on Tuesday.

He said the Opposition was not against reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and Assemblies.

According to several members who attended the meeting both in person and online, the Trinamool Congress conveyed the message that not all its MPs might be able to be present in Parliament, drawing criticism.

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said their absence “will help the BJP”.

Detailing the “dangers of delimitation”, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said barring one seat in Jammu, all went to the BJP.

Assam’s recent delimitation was also cited as an example of possible gerrymandering in the garb of redrawing constituencies.

On Union Territories

CPI(ML) general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya, who joined the meeting virtually, highlighted the “alarming” rise in representation from Union Territories, from 20 to 35 members.

He said that the government could be planning to divide Bihar and West Bengal to carve out Union Territories from Muslim-majority districts.

The Trinamool Congress was represented by its deputy leader in the Rajya Sabha, Sagarika Ghose.

Objecting to Ms. Ghose’s remarks on the party’s inability to ensure 100% attendance, Mr. Gandhi said such a position was not acceptable. He urged all Opposition members to be present and to vote to defeat the Bill. “Their absence will come at a political cost, and will be seen as helping the BJP,” he said.

The DMK, represented by T.R. Baalu, said that all its MPs would attend despite the ongoing election campaign in Tamil Nadu. Parties from Kerala pointed out that they were present for the debate on the FCRA law even amid the Assembly election in the State.

Ms. Ghose, sources said, argued that the Trinamool Congress alone is facing a head-on battle with the BJP, unlike the DMK or the situation in Kerala.

At this point, sources said, Mr. Gandhi urged former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, who had joined via video call, to speak to West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress president Mamata Banerjee on the issue. Hours after the meeting ended, Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha leader Derek O’Brien wrote on X, “We are doing all that it takes to defeat the stunt being presented as a Bill in the Lok Sabha.”

The extended Budget Session in Parliament, reconvening on Wednesday, will deliberate on a legislative package comprising the Constitution (131st) Amendment Bill, the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, and the Delimitation Bill, 2026.

The government has said these are aimed at expediting the implementation of 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies.

“All of us are in favour of the women’s reservation Bill, but have concerns about the way it is being brought. It is politically motivated. Just to gag and suppress Opposition parties, the government is doing this,” Mr. Kharge told reporters, reiterating the Opposition’s position that reservation should be implemented within the existing strength of 543 Lok Sabha seats for the 2029 Lok Sabha election.

“They (the BJP-led government) are playing tricks with delimitation,” he said.

Delimitation move will affect Punjab, says Akali Dal

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

Shiromani Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal on Wednesday opposed the proposed move on delimitation.

The exercise is “brazenly discriminatory against Punjab”, he said.

Mr. Badal said, “Punjab is predominantly a minority-character state. We will be the biggest victim of this population-based delimitation. Compared with a nominal increase in seats for Punjab, Haryana will witness a nearly 100% increase [in constituencies] and get double the number of seats in the Lok Sabha. Where does that leave us? We are already a victim of systematic discrimination and injustice.”

BJP trying to ‘gerrymander’ all Lok Sabha constituencies in ‘anti-national’ act: Rahul

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday accused the Narendra Modi government of engaging in an “anti-national act” in its bid to use the 2011 Census data to operationalise the women’s reservation law and carry out the delimitation exercise.

In a video statement, Mr. Gandhi argued that the move would deny Other Backward Classes (OBC) their rightful share of seats under the women’s quota, since the 2011 Census data did not have caste enumeration, unlike the 2026 Census.

In a separate X message, Mr. Gandhi said the BJP was trying to “gerrymander” all Lok Sabha constituencies to its advantage for the 2029 election. “Having captured the Election Commission, PM Modi is confident that he can capture the Delimitation Commission too. The Congress will not allow this to happen,” he said.

“They are doing a dishonest thing. Prime Minister [Narendra Modi] doesn’t want women’s reservation done on the basis of caste census, new census, or the OBC census. He wants the 2011 Census in which the Backward Classes do not figure. He wants to take away your share,” Mr. Gandhi said.

“They don’t want you to get reservation on the basis of your actual strength. This isn’t just against the Backward Classes but an anti-national activity,” he added.

Rahul Gandhi

The Congress leader said that the enhanced Lok Sabha numbers and the allocation of seats after delimitation would adversely affect small States, southern States and northeastern States.

He said if the government was sincere about implementing women’s reservation, they should do it within the existing framework.

The Opposition leader alleged that the women’s reservation amendments were not just an attempt to push through delimitation but also a diversionary tactic because of the Epstein Files, referring to convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. “Modi *ji*, I know that you want to send the message that you are pro-women. But you are scared of Epstein Files,” Mr. Gandhi alleged.

The Congress sharpened its attack against the government over its delimitation proposal on Wednesday, with the party’s communications chief Jairam Ramesh accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi of engaging in “deliberate deceit” on the issue.

In a post on X, Mr. Ramesh said the Bills circulated by the government ahead of the special sitting of Parliament contradicted the “so-called assurances” given earlier by the Prime Minister on delimitation and a uniform proportionate increase in the strength of all States in the Lok Sabha. “The Prime Minister is a so-called leader whose only distinguishing feature is his unmatched ability to be a misleader,” Mr. Ramesh said, alleging that the proposed exercise would reduce the relative strength of southern States as well as smaller States in the northwest and the east in the Lok Sabha.

The Congress also accused the government of trying to sidestep the demand for a caste census. Party leaders claimed that delaying or avoiding such an exercise would prevent the availability of updated caste data.

Hoist black flags to protest delimitation move, says Stalin

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

M.K. Stalin

Describing the proposed Constitution amendment on delimitation as a “conspiracy” and a “black law”, DMK president and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Wednesday called upon the people of the State to hoist black flags in every home and in public places on Thursday.

“We will hoist black flags in our homes to express our protest and opposition to the amendment to be introduced in Parliament – a black law. Hoist black flags against the BJP, which is leading India into a dark period,” said Mr. Stalin, who convened an urgent meeting of party MPs and district secretaries.

In a video message, he said the BJP had consistently proved his point that the Tamil Nadu Assembly election on April 23 was a fight between Tamil Nadu and Delhi.

“It has understood the true meaning of our statement. It does not want Tamil Nadu to prosper, nor does it want the representatives of Tamil Nadu to be heard in Parliament. It is introducing an amendment to give shape to this conspiracy. How can we accept a conspiracy as law?” he asked.

“Hoist black flags against this black law in every home and public place. Let me warn you again: delimitation cannot be based solely on population. This black law must not be enacted. It is the single demand of eight crore Tamils. Let us transcend political barriers and raise our voice for the rights of the State. Tamil Nadu will fight and win. Let us win unitedly,” he said.

Mr. Stalin accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of reducing the southern States and their people to the status of secondary citizens.

“The time has come for us to tell the BJP in Delhi who the Tamil people are. The time has come to show opposition from every family to the BJP, which seeks to strangulate the voice of Tamil Nadu,” he said.

He wondered whether this was a punishment for controlling population growth. “Will you snatch away our political rights even though we stand for the welfare and unity of the nation? Nothing could be more cruel than this,” he said.

The Chief Minister alleged that after claiming that the number of seats in the southern States would increase, the BJP government was planning to substantially raise the number of seats in the northern States, where it enjoys greater support.

“By this measure, it would make representation from the southern States less significant. We consider this a grave injustice,” he said.

Mr. Stalin said the BJP government, “which does not listen to good advice from anyone, is not listening to us either”.

Disparity in numbers

“They are bringing in an amendment to suppress the voice of Tamil Nadu in Parliament. It will create a disparity in the number of MPs representing the northern and southern States,” he added.

In the name of delimitation, the BJP government is overstepping its limits and betraying the interests of the southern States.

“Tamil Nadu will not remain idle if more political power is heaped on the northern States while the powers of the southern States are reduced. I have said that every family will take to the streets and protest,” Mr. Stalin said.

Samrat Choudhary sworn in as Bihar’s first BJP CM

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary with former Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in Patna on Wednesday. ANI

The newly elected leader of the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA), Samrat Choudhary, was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Bihar on Wednesday, marking the end of Nitish Kumar’s record tenure in the post.

Two senior leaders from the JD(U), Bijendra Prasad Yadav and Vijay Kumar Choudhary, took oath as Ministers. Both have been designated as Deputy CMs in the new BJP-led NDA government in the State.

Before being sworn in, Mr. Samrat Choudhary visited a famous Hanuman temple in the State capital, Patna, to offer prayers and seek blessings.

Senior BJP leaders, including party chief Nitin Nabin, Union Minister J.P. Nadda, and national general secretary (organisation) B.L. Santosh, along with Mr. Kumar, were present.

After taking oath, Mr. Samrat Choudhary went to the party headquarters to meet party workers and leaders. “With the blessings of Nitish Kumar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, I will take forward the work of development and growth in the State,” he told presspersons.

Administrative issues

In his first meeting as Chief Minister of Bihar, Mr. Choudhary directed State officials to implement a policy of “zero tolerance” against corruption with absolute firmness.

He also told officials to ensure that the general public received proper facilities and that their issues are resolved promptly at the block, circle, and police station levels. He asserted that corruption would not be tolerated at any cost, from the highest levels of administration to the grassroots.

“Whenever an issue concerning the public arises within any department, ensure that immediate action is taken to address it. There should be no bureaucratic complexities regarding the resolution of land-related disputes; instead, streamline procedures to ensure their speedy disposal,” Mr. Choudhary said.

‘50% increase in seats is an illusion, a plan to mask fall’

The Hindu Bureau
COIMBATORE

P. Chidambaram

Veteran Congress leader and former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram on Wednesday alleged that the proposed increase in Lok Sabha seats, followed by delimitation would reduce the proportional representation of southern States and weaken their voice in Parliament.

Addressing presspersons in Coimbatore, he said the plan to increase the total number of seats by 50% before carrying out delimitation was “an illusion” that would mask an actual decline in representation for States such as Tamil Nadu.

He said a direct delimitation exercise would have reduced Tamil Nadu’s seats from 39 to 32, which would have been evident to the public.

However, under the proposed method, he said, Tamil Nadu’s seats would first appear to rise to 58 before falling to 46 after delimitation.

“People are expected to see only the increase from 39 to 46, but not the underlying reduction in proportional share,” he said, adding that voters in southern States would understand the implications.

He contrasted this with northern States, stating that Uttar Pradesh’s current 80 seats could increase to around 140 after the same process, widening the gap between States. “The disparity will grow from 80 versus 39 to about 140 versus 46,” he said.

Mr. Chidambaram said the combined share of the five southern States – Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana – in the Lok Sabha would decline from 24.3% to 20.7%. “The voice of the southern States, which is already not adequately heard, will be further suppressed,” he said.

Urgency questioned

Mr. Chidambaram also raised concerns over the timing of the upcoming parliamentary session scheduled for April 16 to 18. He said Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge had questioned the urgency in convening the session when the next general election is due in 2029.

Alleging a planned move, he said the timing coincided with peak election campaigning, making it difficult for MPs from Tamil Nadu and West Bengal to attend.

He claimed this was intended to limit opposition to certain amendments.

Despite this, he expressed confidence that MPs from the DMK-Congress alliance would attend the session.

ASSEMBLY POLLS

'People denied benefits due to Mamata govt.'

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday alleged that several welfare schemes introduced by the Narendra Modi government have not reached the people of West Bengal due to Mamata Banerjee's reluctance to allow their implementation in the State. She said people in the State are being deprived of schemes such as Ayushman Bharat, PM Kisan and Awaas Yojana. "West Bengal has been destroyed by the party," she said.

"Your money was ready in Delhi, but the Trinamool government has not allowed that to be spent here," she claimed. "The poor people of the State are not getting the benefits of free ration given by the Centre under the PDS scheme, but the State's Minister is eating away with the funds meant for it," she said. PTI

Nirmala Sitharaman

Suvendu alleges 'Arabic culture' push in Bengal

Senior BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari on Wednesday launched a scathing attack on the Trinamool Congress government, accusing it of imposing "Arabic culture" on West Bengal while asserting his party's commitment to protect the State as a "homeland for Bengali Hindus."

Speaking at the launch of the 'Matri Shakti Bharosa Card' on Bengali New Year, he alleged that the current dispensation is systematically undermining the State's Sanatan heritage.

"We are witnessing an attempt to impose Urdu language and a culture that keeps women veiled," he said.

He described the party's 'Sankalp Patra' (manifesto) as a document of "trust" aimed at restoring the "lost glory" of West Bengal as the country's cultural capital. PTI

"National Democratic Alliance is winning for sure, DMK is losing for sure and we have to vote for a better Tamil Nadu, *viksit* Tamil Nadu

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister

Smriti promises monthly aid for Bengal women

Senior BJP leader Smriti Irani launched the 'Matri Shakti Bharosa Card', promising ₹3,000 monthly aid for women in West Bengal if the BJP comes to power, while attacking the Trinamool Congress government over corruption, financial mismanagement, and women's safety concerns. PTI

"Central Ministers are bringing in money. The Finance Minister is distributing cards. The EC should take strong action

MAMATA BANERJEE
West Bengal Chief Minister

Home Minister Amit Shah during a public meeting ahead of the Bengal Assembly polls in Manikchak. PTI

Shah says BJP will prioritise solving Gurkha issues in Bengal

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Wednesday that once the BJP comes to power in West Bengal, it will resolve the issues of Gurkhas living in Darjeeling as a priority within the framework of the Constitution.

Mr. Shah also promised to withdraw all cases registered against community leaders and workers for violent agitations in the past.

"Once we form the government in Bengal, our priority would be to resolve the Gurkha issue as quickly as possible within the constitutional framework. We will withdraw all pending police cases against Gurkha leaders and workers after we come to power in the State, and members of the community will get justice," he said.

The Home Minister was unable to reach the upper reaches of Lebong in the Darjeeling hills due to unfavourable weather conditions, and addressed the gathering through a recorded video message. Mr. Shah expressed regret that he could not attend the meeting but promised that he will attend a scheduled public meeting at Sukna in Kurseong on April 21.

Political solution

The demand for a permanent political solution to the Gurkha issue, which essentially means that the administrative control of the Darjeeling hills should wrest with the Gurkha people, has dominated the politics of the Darjeeling hills for several decades since the 1980s. The demand for a separate State of Gorkhaland to be carved out territories of the Darjeeling hills and the foothills has not found support from any mainstream political parties in the State, but the BJP has promised a permanent political solution for the people in the Darjeeling hills within the framework of the Constitution.

Mr. Shah also referred to the non-participation of the West Bengal government in the tripartite talks held by the interlocutor appointed by the Government of India. The Centre had in October 2025 appointed Pankaj Kumar Singh, former Deputy National Security Adviser, as "interlocutor and government representative" on the issue of "Darjeeling, Dooars and Terai".

Mr. Shah said that despite multiple attempts in the past year and a half to resolve the Gurkha issue, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and her representatives skipped all three meetings held in Delhi to address the problem. "I chose to reach out to Bengal and appointed an interlocutor to mediate with all stakeholders concerned. But even there, Mamata Banerjee gave no time to the mediator. That's because she doesn't want justice for Gurkhas who are true patriots living in the Darjeeling hills," Mr. Shah said.

Ms. Banerjee had opposed the appointment of the interlocutor and written to the Prime Minister to reconsider the move. She had said the State government was of the view that any initiative concerning the Gurkha community or the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration region must be undertaken in full consultation with the State government to preserve the "hard-earned peace and tranquillity in the region".

Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) president Bimal Gurung, who is an ally of the BJP, welcomed the remarks made by the Home Minister and expressed hope that the BJP would deliver on the promise of permanent political solution.

A plate of fish, a dash of pride: polls, Poila Boishakh prove to be heady mix

Election serves up a delectable fare during Bengali New Year celebrations as parties and candidates make use of the opportunity to prove their affinity to the culture and tradition of the land; candidates across political parties campaigned with fish to signal their connect to the ground

IN FOCUS

Shrabana Chatterjee
Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Bengali identity was on full display in poll-bound West Bengal on Poila Boishakh, the Bengali New Year, on Wednesday, as candidates across political parties campaigned with fish to signal cultural affiliation ahead of the Assembly election.

In Kolkata, senior Trinamool Congress leader and Tollygunge candidate Aroop Biswas participated in a campaign carrying a fish in his hands. A similar campaign was launched by Kaustav Bagchi, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate from Barrackpore, who went door to door greeting residents with a fish dangling from his hand.

Mr. Biswas's campaign banner read "*Maache-Bhaate Bangali* (Fish- and rice-eating Bengalis)". "We cannot function without fish. But they are trying to stop that fish itself. In the BJP-ruled States, people selling fish are getting beaten up. This is our way of protest," Mr. Biswas said. The prominent Minister in Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's Cabinet was seen carrying a large fish decorated with ornaments as he walked with party workers.

Fish on the menu: Trinamool Congress candidate Aroop Biswas leads a New Year procession in Garia on Wednesday. ANI

Mr. Bagchi sought to counter the perception of the BJP as being opposed to non-vegetarian food habits."*Kheye maach raat din, BJP ke vote din* (Eat fish day and night and vote for the BJP)," Mr. Bagchi told people in his constituency.

He added that BJP workers across the State would celebrate Poila Boishakh by eating fish across party offices.

This is not the first time that fish and fish-eating habits have taken centre stage in the election campaign. On March 22, the BJP candidate from Bidhannagar, Sharadwat Mukherjee, canvassed with a fish to convey that the saffron party would not impose any restrictions on non-vegetarian food if voted to power in West Bengal.

The narrative around vegetarian and non-vegetarian dietary preferences has dominated the election campaign, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee trading barbs over the issue.

Taking centre stage

Across the State, leaders and candidates from political parties dressed in traditional attire offered prayers at temples to mark the Bengali New Year. Ms. Banerjee was seen offering prayers at the Kalighat temple near her residence on the eve of Poila Boishakh. In a video message, she emphasised that Bengal is the seat of culture and tradition.

The Leader of the Opposition, Suvendu Adhikari, along with four other BJP candidates, participated in a roadshow after offering prayers at a Kali temple in north Kolkata.

Swapna Barman, an athlete and Trinamool candidate from Rajganj, was seen dancing with supporters during her campaign trail. BJP leader Dilip Ghosh, contesting from Kharagpur Sadar, joined supporters during a *kirtan* recital.

Bengali culture and identity have remained central to the campaign of the Trinamool, with the ruling party often dubbing the BJP as a party of "outsiders" that is unfamiliar with the culture and traditions of West Bengal. The BJP has been desperately trying to counter this image.

The Poila Boishakh celebrations offered an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their affinity with Bengali culture.

'Uniform Civil Code will erase tribal identity; won't accept it'

West Bengal Forests Minister, who is contesting from Binpur, says 'tribals have our own systems, traditions, and cultures'; says development of small-scale industries could be helpful in State

INTERVIEW

Birbaha Hansda

Shrabana Chatterjee

X@BIRBAHA_HANSDA

West Bengal Minister for Forests, Self Help Groups and Self Employment Birbaha Hansda, who is contesting the Assembly polls from Binpur, says the proposed Uniform Civil Code threatens tribal traditions and autonomy. She speaks about representation, job scarcity, forest-based livelihoods, and why she believes small-scale industries and local knowledge must drive employment. Edited excerpts:

The BJP has said it will implement the UCC within six months if voted to power. As a tribal leader, how do you view this?

We the tribals have our own systems, traditions, and cultures. Our practices are the gift of our forefathers, and it is our way of keeping our history alive through our everyday lives. But the BJP is trying to force us into giving up our traditions with the UCC implementation. We will not accept this.

Much of our worship and everyday life is rooted in nature, because that is part of our identity. They want to snatch away our individuality. We are strongly opposing this forced imposition.

Has your presence improved the representation of the marginalised, or is it tokenism?

There has definitely been some improvement. Whenever I speak with the Chief Minister, I raise demands of tribals, such as recognition of our religious code. She tries to understand these issues with me for better policy decisions. When I spoke about the issue of fake Scheduled Tribe certificates, I mentioned the gaps in the information reaching her. After that, she instructed officials to look into it carefully.

Since you are contesting from Binpur, what promises do you have for your voters?

I don't go around saying "I will do this" or "I will do that." My work depends on the needs of the people. I can never, on my own, promise that I will do something specific. Because I have to engage with the people of that area, understand their priorities, and act accordingly.

How do you respond to concerns over job scarcity in West Bengal, with the Opposition promising more jobs and industrial growth?

Job scarcity exists at both the State and the Central levels. In West Bengal, the development of small-scale industries could be helpful because larger industries do not always employ local people, as they often bring workers from outside. Therefore, instead of only focusing on big industries, it is better that we also think about smaller, local-level employment opportunities for widespread employment.

The BJP has also fielded SC/ST candidates. How do you differentiate yourself?

People in the villages here still see me as a neighbourhood woman. I have not changed my humble lifestyle just because I am a Minister.

What is your view on the human-elephant crisis in Jhargram?

With plantations and constructions coming up in the forest, the natural habitat gets disturbed, and it scares elephants. So, if people in these areas become a little more aware, the situation can improve.

What are the key demands you are hearing from people?

The biggest demand is housing. Currently, the Union government has stopped the housing scheme, and for poor people, having a roof over their heads is their primary need; they do not ask for much beyond that.

We are reassuring people that even though the Centre has stopped funding, the State government will provide money for housing.

'DMK-Congress set to secure a two-thirds majority in T.N. poll'

The Hindu Bureau
ERODE

D. K. Shivakumar

Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka and Congress leader D.K. Shivakumar, on Wednesday, stressed the need for unity, stating that the DMK, Congress, and INDIA bloc must remain united to ensure good governance and peace in the country. He alleged that the BJP was attempting to create divisions in South India, particularly on linguistic and religious lines, and called upon voters to reject such efforts.

Seeking votes for Congress candidate Gopinath Palaniyappan in the Erode (East) Assembly constituency, Mr. Shivakumar referred to the role of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge in building the alliance, and said the coalition represented a strong platform for inclusive governance.

Highlighting the contribution of southern States, he said Tamil Nadu and Karnataka played a significant role in India's development and cautioned against the Centre's "neglect".

Projecting the alliance as industry-friendly, Mr. Shivakumar said it would ensure a conducive environment for all sectors while prioritising the welfare of the common people.

He also urged voters to be cautious about newly formed political parties, questioning their policies and track record.

Invoking the legacy of former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, he said the "Dravidian model" had laid a strong foundation for development.

Addressing presspersons after his campaign, Mr. Shivakumar said he had travelled across several constituencies in Tamil Nadu, and reiterated that the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam-led alliance, along with the INDIA bloc, remained robust. He said the people of Tamil Nadu had already made up their mind to vote for the DMK government. The alliance would secure a two-thirds majority, he stated.

Mr. Shivakumar said the DMK government had performed exceedingly well over the past five years and had implemented several welfare schemes for the people.

INBRIEF

SC stays HC order protecting Pawan Khera from arrest

The Supreme Court on Wednesday stayed an order of the Telangana High Court granting interim protection from arrest to Congress leader and spokesperson Pawan Khera in connection with an FIR filed by Riniki Bhuyan Sharma, wife of Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, over his allegations made a press conference on April 4 that she held multiple passports. A Bench of Justices J.K. Maheshwari and A.S. Chandurkar said it was "surprised" by the High Court's April 10 order granting Mr. Khera one-week interim relief, and issued notice to him on a petition filed by the Assam Police challenging the grant of such protection.

HC permits IVF procedure for soldier in vegetative state

The Delhi High Court has permitted the continuation of IVF (in vitro fertilisation) procedure for an Indian Army soldier, who is in a persistent vegetative state with no scope of neurological recovery in the near future. In the order passed on April 13, 2026, the court said the soldier's earlier consent, which was given when he started the IVF procedure, was sufficient even now, and the wife's consent would be treated as valid on his behalf for the purposes of the Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Act. The wife of the soldier had approached the court seeking directions for extraction of her husband's genetic material for IVF.

Unemployment rate shows a slight increase in March

The unemployment rate (UR) for persons aged 15 and above stood at 5.1% in March, up by 0.2 percentile points from February, largely due to urban joblessness, according to the Periodic Labour Force Survey prepared by the National Statistics Office on Wednesday. The report said UR in rural areas was 4.3%, while in urban areas it was 6.8%. Among women aged 15 and above, the UR was 4.1% in rural areas and 9% in urban areas. The female Labour Force Participation Rate declined to 34.4% in March from 35.3% in February. The Worker Population Ratio for persons aged 15 and above was 52.6% in March.

Justice Shekhar Yadav retires amid pending impeachment

The Allahabad High Court judge Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav retired on Wednesday, amid a pending motion seeking his removal in Parliament, in relation to a controversial speech made in 2024. With his retirement, all pending motions against him will be nullified as such motions are only applicable in the case of sitting judges. Addressing an event organised by the legal cell of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad on December 8, 2024, Justice Yadav made several veiled attacks against the Muslim community while speaking about a Uniform Civil Code. He was accused of engaging in "hate speech" and "incitement to communal disharmony" in violation of the Constitution.

Bageshwar Dham gets govt. nod to receive foreign funds

Dhirendra Krishna Shastri, leader of the religious body, advocates establishment of a 'Hindu Rashtra'; FCRA registration mandatory for NGOs or associations to receive foreign donations

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has granted registration under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) to Baba Bageshwar Dham, a religious body led by Dhirendra Krishna Shastri, a Madhya Pradesh-based godman who seeks to establish 'Hindu Rashtra'.

Mr. Shastri, 29, is often courted by politicians and is known for his provocative statements on religious matters. His website has a separate section to collect donations from within India.

Despite repeated attempts, the religious body could not be reached for comments.

Bageshwar Dham Sarkar Acharya Dhirendra Krishna Shastri at a religious event at the Brigade Parade Ground in Kolkata. ANI

Six of 38 NGOs given FCRA registration till Wednesday are in the 'Religious (Hindu)' category

Mandatory registration
Registration under the FCRA is mandatory if a non-government organisation (NGO) or an association wants to receive foreign donations.

NGOs can receive foreign contributions for social, educational, religious, economic, and cultural programmes and can be registered for at least one or multiple categories.

The Shri Bageshwar Jan Seva Samiti Gadha at Chhatarpur in Madhya Pradesh has been registered under the 'Religious (Hindu)' programme, other than cultural, economic, educational and social categories.

Till April 15, 38 NGOs have been granted FCRA registration, out of which six have stated 'Religious (Hindu)' as one of the programmes for which foreign funds are required. Other than Bageshwar Dham, those registered under the category are Ramakrisha Missions at Bolpur in West Bengal and Purnea in Bihar, Divya Jyoti Jagriti Sansthan in Delhi, The Institution at Dharmasthala in Karnataka, and Radha Soami Satsang at Agra, Uttar Pradesh.

Five-year validity
A FCRA registration is valid for five years, after which the NGO has to apply for a renewal. Since 2015, the FCRA registrations of more than 18,000 NGOs have been cancelled. As on April 15, there are 14,538 FCRA-registered NGOs active in the country.

During the Budget session of Parliament, which concluded on April 2, the Union government proposed to introduce the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026 to amend the 2010 Act. However, following an uproar by Opposition parties, its discussion and passage were deferred.

The Chief Ministers of poll-bound Tamil Nadu and Kerala, and Christian groups opposed the Bill as it empowers the Ministry to take over the property and assets of an NGO if its FCRA registration is cancelled or suspended.

Door-to-door visits for Census start in 8 States, U.T.s today

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

From Thursday, enumerators will begin door-to-door visit in eight States and Union Territories seeking response to a set of 33 questions for the first phase of Population Census, 2027 – the House Listing and Housing Operations (HLO).

The field operations will begin in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Goa, Karnataka, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Odisha, and Sikkim, along with the New Delhi Municipal Corporation area and Delhi Cantonment Board in the National Capital Territory, following the conclusion of the 15-day self-enumeration period, a statement by the Union Home Ministry said.

The exercise will be carried out over a 30-day period till May 15.

The self-enumeration facility, introduced this time, saw the participation of nearly 12 lakh households through the official portal (se.census.gov.in).

The facility was made available prior to the field enumeration period to enable residents to submit their details online, the Ministry said.

"Residents who have completed self-enumeration are requested to keep their generated self-enumeration ID (SE ID) ready and share the same with the enumerator during the field visit to complete the HLO process," it added.

During the HLO phase, enumerators will collect information relating to housing conditions, household details, amenities available and assets possessed by the households.

Next phase
In the next phase, the self-enumeration facility will start in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Chandigarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh on Thursday, and will be available till April 30. The house-to-house houselisting in these States/Union Territories will be conducted from May 1 to 30. In Bihar, the 15-day self-enumeration period will commence on April 17 and continue till May 1, followed by field operations from May 2 to 31.

CBSE 10th: girls outshine boys; Thiruvananthapuram, Vijayawada are top regions

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Continuing a long-standing trend, girls outperformed boys in the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Class 10 examination results declared on Wednesday. The pass percentage for girls stood at 94.99% – 1.3 percentage points higher than the 92.69% recorded by boys.

South India continued to dominate the regional rankings, with Thiruvananthapuram and Vijayawada regions sharing the top spot with a 99.79% pass rate, followed closely by Chennai (99.58%) and Bengaluru (98.91%). Delhi West and Delhi East followed close behind, with 97.45% and 97.33%, respectively.

The overall pass percentage for 2026 stood at 93.7%, reflecting a marginal improvement over last year's 93.66%. Of the 24,71,777 students who appeared for the exam, 23,16,008 were declared to have passed.

Students cheer after the release of CBSE Class 10th results in Prayagraj on Wednesday. PTI

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan stated on X, "Those who have succeeded deserve commendation for their hard work, discipline and perseverance in reaching this milestone. At the same time, it is important to recognise that a single examination does not define one's potential."

According to official data released by the CBSE, 55,368 students scored above 95% and 2,21,574 above 90%.

This year's announcement is particularly significant as it marks the roll-out of the new two-exam system.

To facilitate the early release of results – nearly a month ahead of the earlier mid-May schedule – the CBSE said it deployed seven lakh evaluators, 46,000 head examiners, and 2,08,991 invigilators for evaluation of approximately 1.6 crore answer books.

Second exam
For students placed in the "compartment" category (approximately 1.47 lakh candidates) or those looking to improve their scores, the second Board exam is scheduled to begin in mid-May.

Students should notify their interest between April 16 and 20.

Career conversations to enable students make better choices

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

SRM Institute of Science and Technology and *The Hindu* will organise 'The Future Career Conversations' series to help students and professionals explore emerging career pathways. The series is designed for undergraduate aspirants, postgraduate students, and working professionals who are looking to upgrade their skills.

The third online session in the series, titled 'Future of Multidisciplinary Learning', will be held on April 18 at 11.30 a.m. and will explore how the convergence of humanities and sciences is shaping the future of education and careers. The discussion will highlight how learners can leverage this approach to remain relevant.The panel will feature A. Vinay Kumar, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Science & Humanities, Management), SRMIST; A. Duraisamy, Dean, Faculty of Science and Humanities, SRMIST; Poorna Pushkala Ayyappan, Technical Professional Advisor - Technology, KBR India; and Viswanath B. Kasi, Mentor, Investor & Advisor - Global Commodity Trading and Advisory Panel member for ITT. The session will be moderated by journalist Soma Basu. To register please visit https://newsth.live/THSRMME or scan the QR code.

SRM
FUTURE CAREER CONVERSATIONS
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE HINDU

The session, 'Future of multidisciplinary learning', will be held from 11.30 a.m. on Saturday

Toll in power plant blast in Chhattisgarh climbs to 20

The Hindu Bureau
RAIPUR

The death toll in Tuesday's boiler tube explosion at a power plant in Sakti district in Chhattisgarh climbed to 20 on Wednesday, while 16 remain hospitalised, a senior police officer said.

Till late Tuesday evening, 14 workers were reported dead. The deceased included six workers from West Bengal and five from Chhattisgarh.

The Opposition Congress, meanwhile, demanded registration of a first information report. The party also demanded higher compensation for the deceased and the injured.

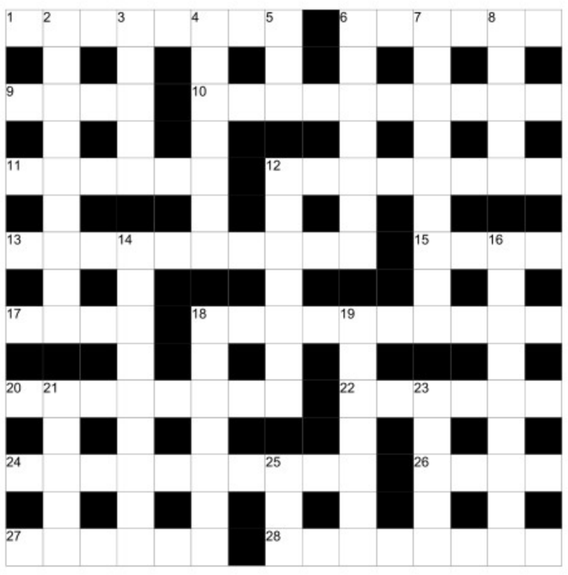
In a related development, Vedanta Power, which owns the plant, announced ₹35 lakh in compensation for the families of each deceased worker. The company will also provide ₹15 lakh to each injured person.

TH CROSSWORD + 14769

(set by Gussalufz)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across
1. Development environment that boss nearly destroyed to grasp a bit of programming (4,4)
6. Surprise for woman expecting escort? (6)
9. Setter going for a social media interaction with Victoria, perhaps (4)
10. Some elaborate trap to teach obscure grammatical term? (10)
11. Oh, let's go back for a campus gathering (6)
12. Gang, in memoir, was regularly retreating for sport (8)
13. Writer got sharply panned (10)
15. Cocaine, son, right away! (4)
17. Collect fingerprint pattern after returning (4)
18. Old bird circling cloud or a kind of delivery service? (4-2-4)
20. Set out quinoa around five following chef's first dish (3,2,3)
22. "Outcome of naughty pout?" "Keeping quiet" (6)
24. Made dry Indian crispy chicken starters, gobbled up with daughter (10)
26. Welcome husband's distress (4)
27. Disentangle gunk and snot after blowing noses (6)
28. Spooner's young boy, batter with poor judgement (3,5)

Down
2. Quite a fort! Wonderfully hosts a small party (3,3,3)
3. Fold coat, bottom to middle (5)
4. Essentially, can't I logically use this operation to convert, say, 1 to 10? (7)
5. How to prune butts, becoming attractive (3)
6. Unoriginal southern liberal (7)
7. Made improvements in newspaper column about model I.I.M.s, with editing (9)
8. Scoffed at faceless men on ecstasy (5)
12. Squabble over private resort area (3,4)
14. All muddled, old language includes old pronunciation of R as L (9)
16. One studying mountains is ordinary for university doctor (9)
18. Voted crankily to accommodate company housing for pigeons (7)
19. Lacking advanced auxiliary supports, ramshackle hut collapsed noisily (7)
21. Main article chases CEO's replacement (5)
23. Uh, sound missing in a chainsaw's clattering? (5)
25. Save up for boat (3)

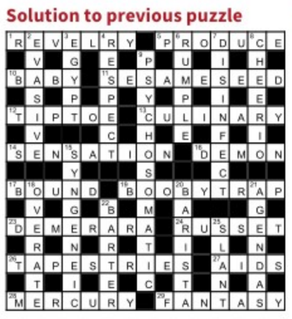
SUDOKU

			8		4	6	2	
						3	4	
	6	1	9					
3					9	7		
5	7						6	3
		9	6					2
					5	2	8	
	5	4						
	1	8	4		2			

No.SS6852 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

7	5	3	2	8	4	6	1	9
9	4	2	6	3	1	8	7	5
8	6	1	5	9	7	2	4	3
4	2	6	9	1	8	5	3	7
1	8	9	3	7	5	4	6	2
5	3	7	4	2	6	1	9	8
2	9	5	1	4	3	7	8	6
6	7	4	8	5	9	3	2	1
3	1	8	7	6	2	9	5	4

FAITH

Decoding the Ramayana

The question arises: why did Lord Narayana chose to incarnate as Rama along with His brothers rather than appearing alone? Sri Desika Srinivasa Tathacharya Swami, while explaining the subtle meanings embedded in the Ramayana, revealed that each brother had a distinct divine purpose. Rama incarnated to demonstrate unwavering adherence to His father's word; Lakshmana to exemplify how a devotee should worship and serve the Lord; Bharata to highlight the supreme importance of reverence towards the Acharya (through the worship of the divine sandals which symbolise Acharyas) and Shatrughna to illustrate the ideal of serving the Lord's devotees.

When Rama sought to cross the ocean, He performed *saranagati* (surrender) to Samudra Raja and lay on a bed of grass for three days, humbly pleading for a way. Yet, Samudra Raja did not respond immediately. The deeper reason, as explained by our Acharyas, lies in the true nature of surrender. A person who performs genuine surrender must possess two essential qualities: the realisation that "I have nothing" (*akinchanyam*) and "I have no other refuge or means" (*ananyagatitvam*). However, Rama is the Supreme Being, the very source of all strength and power. Therefore, Samudra Raja did not initially accept this.

Sita, through her conduct in the Ramayana, demonstrated how a truly surrendered soul should remain steadfast, thinking of God alone at all times, with unwavering faith, patience, and complete dependence on the Lord. Hanuman is portrayed as the Acharya, serving as the guiding force who facilitates and exemplifies the doctrine of *saranagati* (surrender), leading the soul towards the Lord.

INBRIEF

Amazon signs $11.57 bn deal for satellite firm Globalstar

Amazon.com said on Tuesday it would acquire Globalstar in an $11.57 billion deal, bolstering its fledgling satellite business as it tries to catch up with Elon Musk's Starlink. Tech companies are pouring in billions of dollars to capture the lucrative market for satellite-based connectivity, but it will be a tall order to match Starlink's 10,000-unit-strong network. Through the deal, Amazon adds Globalstar's two dozen satellites to its existing network of more than 200. Amazon has been working to ramp up its network by deploying about 3,200 satellites in Earth's low orbit by 2029, with roughly half required to be in place by a July regulatory deadline. It is also preparing to roll out its satellite internet services later this year. Globalstar's satellite network is designed for reliable, low-data connections directly to mobile devices, or Direct-to-Device (D2D). REUTERS

WPI inflation rises to 38-month high of 3.88%

Wholesale price inflation rose sharply to an over 3-year high of 3.88% in March, driven by a sharp spike in rates of fuel, power and manufactured items amid the West Asia crisis. Government data on Wednesday showed Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation rose for the fifth straight month in March as core inflation accelerated, amid softening of primary food items. As higher energy prices eventually generalise to other commodity prices, we expect WPI inflation to rise further in the coming months. The high WPI inflation in March reflects elevated global commodity prices and the impact of the energy price shock since the beginning of the West Asia conflict. WPI inflation was 2.13% in February, and 2.25% in March last year. Inflation in the fuel and power basket spiked to 1.05% in March, from a deflation of 3.78% in February. REUTERS

Illegalities alleged in Sir Dorabji Tata Trust

Appointments made in violation of Maharashtra Public Trust Act, alleges Mehli Mistry, seeks appointment of administrator; contests his non-renewal as Tata Trusts Trustee, argues it violates resolution for mutual perpetual reappointments among trustees of SDTT and Sir Ratan Tata Trust

Raghuvir Srinivasan
CHENNAI

Mehli Mistry, who stepped down from the Tata Trusts as a Trustee in November last year after being denied reappointment, has alleged grave illegalities in the administration of Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT) and prayed for the appointment of an Administrator to run the trust.

In a filing before the Charity Commissioner, Mumbai, seen by *businessline*, Mr. Mistry questioned the legality of the Board of Trustees arguing that appointments in the recent past were made in violation of Section 30A of the Maharashtra Public Trust Act 1950. The Board of Trustees now comprises of Noel Tata (Chairman), Venu Srinivasan (Vice Chairman), Vijay Singh, Darius Khambata, Bhaskar Bhat and Neville Tata. The last two were appointed in place of Mehli Mistry and Pramit Jhaveri, who stepped down in February.

Trust deficit: Alleging that the governance of the trusts has been seriously compromised, Mr. Mistry named two trustees. FILE PHOTO

Interestingly, Mr. Mistry has declared that he has "no desire" to rejoin the Trust board but that it should be run by "able, honest Trustees or an Administrator". Earlier this month, Mr. Mistry had filed an objection with the Charity Commissioner against the presence of Venu Srinivasan and Vijay Singh as trustees on the Bai Hirabai Jamsetji Tata Navsari Charitable Institution on grounds of their not being Parsis and residents of Mumbai, as required by the trust deed.

Objecting to the Change Report filed by SDTT after his exit and the entry of new trustees, Mr. Mistry has contested his non-renewal as a trustee, arguing that it violates a 2024 resolution for mutual perpetual reappointments among trustess of SDTT and the other major trust, Sir Ratan Tata Trust.

Mr. Mistry has contended that the board that voted him out was illegal as the appointment to perpetuity of Noel Tata and Venu Srinivasan on the board was in violation of Section 30A of Maharashtra Public Trusts Act. The said section was introduced into the Act by the Maharashtra government on September 1, 2025 and it placed statutory restrictions and prescribed governance norms relating to the manner of reappointment of trustee, limits on tenure and limitations on appointment of perpetual trustees.

An email sent to Tata Trusts CEO Siddharth Sharma for his reaction remained unanswered until the time of going to press.

Alleging that the governance of the trusts has been seriously compromised, Mr. Mistry has named two trustees in his filing for what he calls "illegal acts". The first pertains to Vijay Singh, who is alleged to have pocketed commissions and sitting fees from Tata Sons and other Tata group companies totally ₹20.13 crore.

"A trustee is bound by strict fiduciary duties to act solely in the best interests of the Trust and to avoid any conflict of interest. The receipt of substantial financial benefits by a Trustee from entities connected with the Trusts is prima facie inconsistent with such obligations," Mr. Mistry's filing says.

Mr. Mistry also alleged that there are other trustees who are receiving monetary or other personal benefits from their positions. Asked for his reaction Vijay Singh told *businessline*: "I will not respond. The Tata Trusts will respond with facts to any queries from the Charity Commissioner."

In a more serious conflict of interest allegation aimed at Venu Srinivasan, Mr. Mistry alleges in the objection filing that Mr. Srinivasan and his son engaged Gerry McGovern, the COO of Jaguar Land Rover Brand & Luxury, as a consultant for Norton Motorcycles, a subsidiary of TVS Holdings.

He alleges that this is a breach of fiduciary duties as a Trustee and nominated director on the Tata Sons board and has pleaded for the Charity Commissioner to direct disclosure by Mr. Srinivasan if any payment was made to Jaguar Land Rover for utilising the services of McGovern. Responding to the allegation, a senior official of the TVS group told *businessline* that the late Ratan Tata and Tata Sons Chairman N. Chandrasekaran were aware of the engagement of McGovern by Norton. He said that McGovern mentored Norton and it was approved by the top management of JLR.

(The writer is Editor, The Hindu businessline)

West Asia crisis: India's exports plunge 7.44% in March; trade gap narrows

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Exports posted the steepest fall in five months, declining by 7.44% in March to $38.92 billion, while imports fell by over 6% due to the West Asia crisis, official data released on Wednesday showed.

The trade deficit, however, narrowed to a nine-month low of $20.67 billion in March due to lower imports. Imports dipped by 6.51% to $59.59 billion in March, driven by a significant decline in inbound shipments of crude oil and gold, the data showed.

For the full 2025-26 fiscal year, exports grew 0.93% to an all-time high of $441.78 billion, while imports rose 7.45% to $775 billion. The trade deficit ballooned to $333.2 billion due to a jump in gold and silver imports during the last fiscal. Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal told reporters that the country's goods and services exports increased by an estimated 4.22% to an all-time high of $860.09 billion in 2025-26 against $825.26 billion in 2024-25.

He said that despite global challenges, Indian exporters are showing resilience and are registering positive growth.

The secretary said that India's exports to the Middle East region fell 57.95% in March.

Gems and jewellery exports fall to 5-year low

Reuters
MUMBAI

Gems and jewellery exports in the 2025/26 fiscal year dipped 3.3% from a year ago to their lowest level in five years, as shipments to top buyer the U.S. nearly halved, a leading trade body said on Wednesday, reflecting the impact of tariffs and duties.

Gem and jewellery exports in the year to the end of March fell to $27.72 billion, the lowest since 2020/21, when COVID-19 pandemic-led lockdowns disrupted trade, and down from $28.7 billion in the previous year, the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) said in a statement on Wednesday.

Airfares surge more than 40% amid tensions in West Asia

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Travellers should brace for a costlier summer break as airfares have surged by more than 40% this April, rising even higher on leisure routes, as tensions in West Asia push up aviation turbine fuel costs and intensify operational challenges for airlines globally.

Data from travel booking portal Cleartrip show a Delhi-Mumbai ticket that averaged ₹6,000 in April 2025 now costs about ₹8,400 – a 40% jump. Bengaluru-Delhi and Mumbai-Chennai saw spikes of 41% and 42% with fares averaging at ₹8,200 and ₹7,800.

Leisure routes hit

The impact is more pronounced on leisure routes. Fares to Srinagar and Leh surged by 70%, climbing from ₹7,500 to ₹12,800, while hill destinations such as Shimla and Manali are up 53%. Northeast and southern holiday circuits such as Shillong, Bagdogra, Munnar and Ooty recorded a rise of about 50%.

International travel too is hit, with many travelling westwards unable to fly via Gulf hubs such as Dubai, Doha and Abu Dhabi and preferring non-stop flights. Flights to London and Paris now average ₹1.05 lakh, up 45% from last year and routes to Turkey and Italy have climbed 41%.

India laps up most of Venezuelan, Russian crude oil

Debayan Tewari
M. Kalyanaraman
CHENNAI

Amid a global crude oil crisis triggered by the Iran war and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, India is likely to have lapped up most of the increased crude oil shipments from Venezuela and Russia.

As per BIMCO, one of the world's largest shipping associations, global crude shipments fell 16% after the war began vis a vis first 9 weeks of the year.

The war roiled energy supplies.

"This represents a reduction of 7.6 million barrels per day (mbpd) to 38.4 mbpd," BIMCO said.

With global shipments down, Venezuela increased shipments of crude oil by 0.4 million barrels per day, as did Russia from the Black Sea by 0.8 mbpd.

"Combined, this accounts for 85% of increased shipments from countries outside of the Persian Gulf. India has been the main destination for the increased shipments," BIMCO said.

The Hindu has been tracking open-source data for the past two weeks and found at least 17 tankers originating in Russia crossed the Suez Canal and bound for ports in India carrying Russian crude. Some have reached India.

BIMCO said before the Iran war, the U.S. Energy Information Administration estimated global 2026 oil production at 79.9 mbpd. "The 7.6 mbpd reduction in seaborne shipments thereby means 9.5% of the previously expected crude oil production is currently not reaching markets. The reduction in shipments has naturally been driven by effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz."

"The United Arab Emirates managed to increase loadings from ports east of the Strait of Hormuz by 0.7 mbpd while Saudi Arabia increased shipments from Yanbu in the Red Sea by 3.0 mbpd," it said, adding, shipments from the region fell 9 mbpd compared with earlier this year.

Even if the Strait of Hormuz is fully reopened, shortages may remain. "[I]t may take a long time for crude oil and other energy shipments to return to previous volumes," BIMCO's chief shipping analyst Niels Rasmussen was quoted as saying.

Japan's Create Medic enters India, plans ₹120-crore investment

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Japanese firm Create Medic, a silicone catheter maker, has established its first office in India in Chennai. The healthcare-focused firm is also planning to set up a manufacturing facility here to cater to the Indian market, neighbouring and African countries. Create would be expanding its network to Delhi and Mumbai and is looking at opportunities to work with Indian doctors to develop innovations that can transform healthcare.

The 50- year-old firm, listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange, started operations in India in 2017. The firm was distributing products through Medi Nippon to hospitals in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Chandigarh, Bengaluru.

"The large Indian medical infrastructure, globally-renowned doctors and strong purchasing power is seeing a growth rate of 8% which makes it a high potential market for our products. Our long-term plan is to start manufacturing in India to make it a supply base for the Indian subcontinent as well as for African countries," said Osamu Imazawa, president, Create Medic Co.

Katsuaki Yamane, MD, Create Medic India, said the firm will invest ₹20 crore in the next 2-3 years in India and then about ₹100 crore in another three years as they proceed to set up manufacturing facility.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
TAMIL NADU STATE HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY (TANSHA),

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
NOTICE INVITING BID
Notice No. 05, TANSHA/ OCIC-PH-1 / 2026 / Dated.10.03.2026.
(Republication No.03)

For and on behalf of Governor of Tamil Nadu Bids for the following works is invited by the, Member (Technical), Tamil Nadu State Highways Authority (TANSHA), Chennai-25. Construction of Four Lane Highway with service roads for 1. Valayakkaranai to Pazhaveri, 2. Pazhaveri to Pulivoy and 3. Pulivoy to Manampathy on the section of Proposed Industrial Corridor of Cheyyar SIPCOT on Hybrid Annuity Mode (HAM)-3 works.

All details regarding the Bid will be available online in the website **www.tntenders.gov.in** from **11.00 a.m (IST) on 27.03.2026 upto 11.30 a.m (IST) on 27.05.2026**. Any changes / corrections will be intimated in the website only.

TAMIL NADU STATE HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY
Chennai - 25
DIPR/1830/TENDER/2026

Innovation and Entrepreneurship Federation of CCS NIAM
(Section 8 Company under CCS NIAM)
Kota Road, Bambala, Near Sanganer, Jaipur 302033, Rajasthan
Telephone: 0141-2795203, website: www.niam-nabi.com

WALK - IN - INTERVIEW

Applications are invited for the following post (on contractual basis) under PM-RKVY Project at IEF of CCS National Institute of Agricultural Marketing: -

Post	Remuneration (Consolidated)	Number of Position
Manager Finance & ICT	1.5 Lakh per month	1
Manager Marketing & Communication	1.5 Lakh per month	1

Interview Schedule- 27th April 2026 (Documents Verification) & 28th April 2026 (Personal Interview)
For more details, please visit www.niam-nabi.com
Chairman, Board of Directors

PUNJAB STATE WAREHOUSING CORPORATION
SCO 74-75, BANK SQUARE, SECTOR-17B CHANDIGARH
PBX: 0172-5197847, 5197846

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

PSWC invites online tenders through GeM Portal for creation of 5.50 LMT godown capacities at 11 locations in the State of Punjab for guaranteed lease of 10 years on Build, Own and Operate/Lease basis for storage requirements of FCI under two bid system 'Technical Bid' and 'Financial Bid'. NIT (alongwith GeM Bid IDs) is available on Department's website i.e. **https://pswc.in** PSWC reserves the right to scrap the tender at any stage without assigning any reason and PSWC will not be held liable for any costs and consequences incurred by the intending bidders. Note: Any corrigendum(s)/Notification(s) to this Notice Inviting E-Tender shall be published Department's website & GeM Portal.

1004/12/2026-27/10488 **Managing Director, PSWC**

भारतीय राष्ट्रीय महासागर सूचना सेवा केंद्र
Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)
(पृथ्वी विज्ञान मंत्रालय भारत सरकार के अधीन एक स्वायत्त निकाय)
(An autonomous body under Ministry of Earth Sciences, Govt. of India)
"ओशियन वैली", प्रगति नगर(बी.ओ.), निज़ामपेट (एस.ओ.), हैदराबाद-500090
"Ocean Valley", Pragathi Nagar (B.O), Nizampet (S.O), Hyderabad – 500090

विज्ञापन संख्या. INCOIS/RMT/01/2026

निम्नलिखित नियमित पदों को सीधी भर्ती तथा प्रतिनियुक्ति के आधार पर भरने हेतु पात्र भारतीय नागरिकों से आवेदन आमंत्रित किए जाते हैं।
Applications are invited from eligible Indian Nationals for filling up of the following Regular Positions on Direct Recruitment and on Deputation.
पदों तथा रिक्तियों का विस्तृत विवरण निम्नलिखित है। The details of positions & vacancies are :-

क्रमांक S.No.	पद कोड Post Code	पदनाम Name of the position	पदों की संख्या No. of Positions
सीधी भर्ती Direct Recruitment			
1.	01,02,03	वैज्ञानिक सहायक Scientific Assistant	03 (02 UR & 01 ST)
प्रतिनियुक्ति पर On Deputation			
4.	04, 05	वैज्ञानिक 'सी' Scientist 'C'	02

पद, पात्रता, आयु सीमा, शैक्षणिक योग्यताएँ, दायित्व, अनुभव, आवेदन की प्रक्रिया तथा अन्य सामान्य शर्तों से संबंधित विस्तृत जानकारी वेबलिंक **https://vacancies.incois.gov.in** पर उपलब्ध है।
Further details about the position, eligibility, age limit academic qualifications, responsibilities, experience, application procedure and other general conditions are available at weblink **https://vacancies.incois.gov.in**
अंतिम तारीख: ऑनलाइन आवेदन प्रस्तुत करने की अंतिम तारीख **May 11, 2026** है।
Closing Date: The last date of submission of online application is **May 11, 2026.**
निदेशक/Director, INCOIS

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS - TIRUPATI
SRI SRINIVASA AYURVEDA PHARMACY, TTD, NARASINGAPURM.

e-Procurement Tender Notice | ADV.No:2/SSAP/SMP/TTD/2026-27, dt:13.04.2026

e-Tenders are invited on e-procurement platform for supply of AMBER Color PET Bottles 30ml, 60ml and 25mm neck Aluminum cap with TTD Emblem/logo on cap.

Bid document downloading start date & time : 15-04-2026 at 4:00 PM
Bid document downloading end date & time : 29-04-2026 at 03:00 PM
Pre-bid meeting date & Venue : 21-04-2026 at 11:30 AM, Venue O/o the Principal, SV Ayurvedic College, TTD, Tirupati

For more details, please visit site **http:// www.tirumala.org** and **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in.**

TTD-40021(31)/1/2026-PRO SEC(Adv.No.15) Date:15-04-2026 **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited
(Wholly owned by Govt. of Karnataka undertaking)
(CIN-U04010KA2002SGC030438)

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP Portal)

BESCOM invites tenders through KPP Portal from eligible bidders against Enquiry No: **BESCOM/2026-27/IND0225** For Procurement of **LT Distribution Boxes** for 100 kVA and 250 kVA Distribution Transformers for BMA(North) Zone, BESCOM as per Tender Specification, GTP and Drawing. Bid Documents available: **16.04.2026**. Last date for Bid Submission: **15.05.2026, 17:00 Hrs.** Opening of Bid Document: **16.05.2026, 17:15 Hrs.**
The Tenders can be obtained through KPP portal Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Aspiring Bidders need to register on KPP portal. Further Bidders can take assistance with KPP help desk contact numbers: **(+91-8046010000, +91-8068948777)** or email at **support@eprochelpdesk.com.**
Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.
Sd/-Chief General Manager(Ele.,), Procurement, Corporate office, BESCOM, 2nd Floor, K R Circle, Bengaluru-560001.
For Electricity related complaints call : 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra Mobile APP.

स्वामी केशवानंद राजस्थान कृषि विश्वविद्यालय, बीकानेर
OFFICE OF JET COORDINATOR

No. :- F ( )/SKRAU/JET/Pre-PG/Ph.D/2026/16 **Dated :- 13/04/2026**

अधिसूचना (Notification)

जेट/प्री-पीजी/पीएचडी प्रवेश परीक्षा-2026 के तहत राजस्थान राज्य के कृषि/पशु चिकित्सा विश्वविद्यालयों और निजी विश्वविद्यालयों/कॉलेजों (राजस्थान सरकार द्वारा केवल कृषि के लिए अनुमति प्राप्त) द्वारा प्रस्तावित विभिन्न कृषि और संबद्ध डिग्री पाठ्यक्रमों में शैक्षणिक सत्र 2026-27 में प्रवेश के लिए प्रवेश परीक्षा दिनांक 21 जून 2026 (रविवार) को आयोजित की जाएगी। जिसके लिए ऑनलाइन आवेदन पत्र दिनांक 18.04.2026 से 17.05.2026 तक और विलंब शुल्क के साथ 20.05.2026 तक JET की अधिकारिक वेबसाइट **https://www.jetskrau2026.com** पर भरा जा सकता है। अधिक जानकारी जैसे पात्रता, परीक्षा समय सारणी इत्यादि के लिए कृपया वेबसाइट पर उपलबध नियमावलियों (Guideline Booklets) का अवलोकन करें।

जेट समन्वयक
राज.संवाद/सी/26/814 **जेट/प्री-पीजी/प्री-पीएचडी प्रवेश परीक्षा-2026**

GAZA CITY

Gaza civil defence says toddler among 10 killed in Israeli strikes

AFP

Gaza's civil defence agency said on Tuesday that a toddler was among 10 people killed in separate Israeli strikes in the northern part of the Palestinian territory. At least 757 have been killed in Gaza since the truce came into effect, according to the territory's Health Ministry, whose figures are considered reliable by the UN. AFP

HONG KONG/MANILA

'China moves to block entrance to disputed South China Sea shoal'

REUTERS

China is employing ships and a barrier to tighten control of the entrance to the Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea amid roiling tension with the Philippines over the disputed feature, satellite imagery obtained by Reuters shows. Scarborough is one of Asia's most hotly disputed maritime sites. REUTERS

WASHINGTON

Vatican should 'stick to matters of morality', says U.S. Vice-President

AFP

U.S. Vice-President J.D. Vance urged the Vatican on Monday to "stick to matters of morality" amid an escalating row between President Donald Trump and Pope Leo over Iran. "It would be best for the Vatican to stick to matters of morality... and let the President of U.S. stick to dictating American public policy," Mr. Vance said. AFP

BEIJING

China to 'resolutely support' Cuba against sustained threats from U.S.

AFP

China will "resolutely support" Cuba against sustained threats from the United States, the Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday, days after President Miguel Diaz-Canel called for dialogue with Washington. Mr. Diaz-Canel insisted last week that he would not resign under pressure from the United States. AFP

Xi meets Russian FM as leaders flock to China over West Asia war

Russia could help offset China's energy shortfalls if shipping through Strait of Hormuz stays disrupted, says Lavrov; experts say China has leverage over Iran and could use it to press for restraint and diplomacy, especially as Gulf states seek stability

Agence France-Presse
BEIJING

China's President Xi Jinping met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Wednesday, Chinese state media said, as a string of leaders of countries impacted by the West Asia war flock to Beijing.

Mr. Lavrov joins Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Vietnamese leader To Lam in meeting with Mr. Xi this week.

The Russian diplomat told a news conference after meeting Mr. Xi that Moscow could "compensate" for China's energy shortages as shipping through the Strait of Hormuz remains choked by the Iran war. Mr. Xi, meanwhile, has sought to position China as a mediator and stable partner in the face of the U.S.- and Israeli-led conflict.

Close ties: Sergey Lavrov with Xi Jinping prior to their meeting at the Great Hall of the People, in Beijing, on Wednesday. AP

Mr. Xi told Abu Dhabi's crown prince on Tuesday that China would play a "constructive role" in promoting peace talks in the West Asia.

In talks with Spain's Sanchez, Mr. Xi warned that the world was facing "chaos and turmoil" and "a contest between justice and force", urging closer cooperation. The Spanish Prime Minister welcomed China's role in seeking to resolve the conflict in the West Asia.

Though the level of diplomatic activity is normal for Beijing, the West Asia war and particularly the issue of energy security have taken on new urgency in diplomatic discussions, according to Dylan Loh, associate professor at Singapore's Nanyang Technological University.

"China has got leverage and influence over Iran, and there are some hopes that China can use this influence in a more direct way," Mr. Loh said.

Countries, particularly in the Gulf, could be hoping China can pressure Iran to stop its attacks on Gulf countries and to persist with diplomatic negotiations, he said.

Beijing and Moscow are close economic and political partners, and the relationship has deepened further since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Trump 'asked China's Xi' not to give Iran weapons

Reuters
WASHINGTON

Donald Trump asked Chinese President Xi Jinping in a letter not to give Iran weapons, and Mr. Xi responded that China was not supplying Tehran, the U.S. president told *Fox Business Network* in an interview that aired on Wednesday. Mr. Trump, in the interview taped on Tuesday, did not say when the letters were exchanged. Last week, he threatened countries with an immediate 50% tariff if they supplied Iran with weapons.

"I wrote him a letter asking him not to do that, and he wrote me a letter saying that, essentially, he's not doing that," Mr. Trump told *FBN's* "Mornings with Maria" programme. He also said he did not expect

Donald Trump

shifts in the global oil market over the war on Iran and changes in Venezuela to impact the dynamics of his planned meeting with Mr. Xi next month. "He's somebody that needs oil. We don't," Mr. Trump said.

In a subsequent Truth Social post, Mr. Trump also wrote that he was "permanently opening" the Strait of Hormuz and China was very happy about it.

"I am doing it for them, also - And the World," Mr. Trump wrote, adding: "President Xi will give me a big, fat, hug when I get there in a few weeks."

It was not immediately clear what Mr. Trump meant as shipping through the Strait of Hormuz remains constrained. The White House did not immediately respond to a request for clarification on the President's post.

Forty-five days after Iran's Revolutionary Guards declared the strait closed, effectively shutting in about 20% of global oil and liquefied natural gas shipments, transit through the waterway remains uncertain – even with the two-week ceasefire now in place. Traffic is at only a fraction of the 130-plus daily crossings seen before the war, sources said.

Teenager kills nine, wounds 13 in school shooting in Turkiye

Agence France-Presse
ISTANBUL

A 14-year-old armed with five guns opened fire at a Turkish school on Wednesday, killing nine people, wounding 13 and sparking scenes of mayhem as students jumped out of windows to escape.

The attack in the southern province of Kahramanmaras province was Turkiye's second such incident in as many days, shocking a country where school shootings are a rare occurrence.

Interior Minister Mustafa Ciftci confirmed nine deaths, with 13 wounded – six in intensive care, three of them in a critical condition.

Turkish police surround the school in Kahramanmaras on Wednesday. AFP

Kahramanmaras province governor Mukerrem Unluer said the attacker was the son of a former police officer. The attacker shot himself during the incident.

Israeli military strikes south of Beirut amid talks in Washington

Agence France-Presse
BEIRUT

Two Israeli strikes on Wednesday hit vehicles south of Beirut, state media reported, while Hezbollah launched rockets at Israel, hours after Lebanon and Israel agreed to hold direct negotiations.

The Israeli military also renewed its call for residents of a swathe of southern Lebanon to leave as it continues to bomb the area. Despite its ongoing attacks, Israel has not targeted the Lebanese capital since a series of attacks across the country on April 8 that killed more than 350 people.

Lebanon's state-run *National News Agency* reported two separate Israeli strikes, both on the coastal highway around 20 km south of Beirut and outside Hezbollah's traditional strongholds.

The Israeli military, meanwhile, said it had detected "approximately 30 launches" by Hezbollah militants towards Israel since the early hours. Hezbollah said it launched rockets at 10 northern Israeli areas.

Meanwhile, United Nations refugee chief Barham Salih on Wednesday called on the international community to provide urgent support to Lebanon.

'Israeli support for Iran attack slumps'

Sambavi Parthasarathy

The latest Israeli Voice Index, a survey published by the Israel Democracy Institute (IDI), shows a decline in Israelis' support for Operation Roaring Lion – the country's term for the joint military attack carried out by the U.S. and Israel on Iran. The survey, conducted during March 22-26, also points to domestic fatigue stemming from persisting economic and security concerns.

An analysis of surveys show that the war has subsequently shifted Israelis' perspectives on the continuation and goals of Operation Roaring Lion. The latest figures are in contrast to the findings revealed by the previous surveys conducted during March 2-3 and March 9-11, respectively.

Israelis take part in an anti-government protest calling for an end to the conflict with Lebanon, in Tel Aviv on April 11. REUTERS

Data shows that when the U.S-Israel attack on Iran began on February 28, an overwhelming 82% of Israelis supported the Operation to some extent. Almost three weeks later, this share declined by about 15 percentage points to 62%.

The share of Israelis who 'strongly supported' the operation declined further, from 64.4% in the initial week to about 42.7% in the latest survey. This was a decline of almost 22 percentage points. Meanwhile, the share of those opposed the Operation increased from 4% to about 12% in the same period.

In the previous surveys, at least 60% of Israelis believed that this operation would achieve its goals of destroying Iran's nuclear project and ballistic missile threats. However, in the latest survey, only 24.4% of Israelis think that their society will be able to bear the burden of the war against Iran as long as it takes for the Operation to attain its goals.

While support for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu still remains popular, it has also declined slightly, compared to the beginning of March. Over 64% of Israelis had then said that they trusted Mr. Netanyahu to manage the Operation properly.

Data shows that only 57% now hold the view that the Operation was primarily driven by strategic security-related considerations. This view is more popular among Jewish respondents.

A majority of Arab respondents hold that his motivations were mainly personal and political.

IN THE MIX

Been a long road for me... plan is to keep playing: RCB's Hazlewood

K. MURALI KUMAR

It's been a bit of a long road for me the last few months... I got the rust out against Rajasthan Royals and felt the rhythm was good today [Wednesday]. The plan is to hopefully keep playing. Our schedule is pretty good from here on in... so fingers crossed I can keep playing — RCB pacer Josh Hazlewood.

BIG BOOST

England all-rounder Jacks set to link up with MI later this week

FILE PHOTO: EMMANUAL YOGINI

England all-rounder Will Jacks is set to link up with Mumbai Indians later this week after missing MI's first few matches of the IPL. Jacks had taken time off following a demanding stretch of cricket, having featured in four of England's five Tests during The Ashes. He also played in the Sri Lanka white-ball tour and the T20 WC.

GREAT SIGN

'Tyagi bowling exceptionally well is a positive to take forward'

R. RAGU

I think Kartik Tyagi bowled exceptionally well, which is a positive to take forward into the next game. A young guy, he's had a number of setbacks... but to see him bowling fast and bowling well is a great sign. I was very impressed with the way he bowled against CSK — KKR bowling coach Tim Southee on Tyagi.

REPRIMANDED

Rahane fined ₹12 lakh for KKR's slow over-rate against CSK

R. RAGU

Kolkata Knight Riders captain Ajinkya Rahane has been fined ₹12 lakh for maintaining a slow over-rate during the IPL 2026 match against Chennai Super Kings at the MAC Stadium. "As this was his team's first offence of the season under Article 2.22 of the IPL's Code of ConductRahane was fined 12 lakh," an IPL advisory said.

Vaishali wins Candidates, to challenge Ju for world title

Sports Bureau

R. Vaishali won the Women's Candidates chess tournament in Cyprus on Wednesday and thus qualified for the World championship match to be played later this year. The Grandmaster from Chennai scored a crushing victory over Russia's Kateryna Lagno in the final round to emerge as the clear winner.

Vaishali finished with 8.5 points, half-a-point more than Kazakhstan's Bibisara Assaubayeva, who was held to a draw by Divya Deshmukh. That draw ensured that Vaishali would go ahead of Assaubayeva in the points table.

She will meet the reigning World champion China's Ju Wenjun in the title match. Uzbekistan's Javokhir Sindarov had won the open section of the Candidates with a round to spare, and he will meet D. Gukesh in the World championship match.

Vaishali's younger brother R. Praggnanandhaa had a disappointing Candidates, finishing seventh in a field of eight, after scoring six points.

The results (final round):
Open: Andrey Esipenko (Rus) 4.5 lost to Fabiano Caruana (USA) 7.5; R. Praggnanandhaa 6 drew with Hikaru Nakamura (USA) 6.5; Matthias Bluebaum (Ger) 6 lost to Anish Giri (Ned) 8.5; Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb) 10 drew with Wei Yi (Chn) 7.
Women: Anna Muzychuk (Ukr) 7 drew with Zhu Jiner (Chn) 7.5; Aleksandra Goryachkina (Rus) 7.5 lost to Tan Zhongyi (Chn) 5.5; R. Vaishali 8.5 bt Kateryna Lagno (Rus) 6.5; Divya Deshmukh 5.5 drew with Bibisara Assaubayeva (Kaz) 8.

Elated: Vaishali and her mother can't hide their joy after the Indian GM's fantastic show. FIDE

It's Vaishali's time to hog the limelight

P.K. Ajith Kumar

She started out as the lowest seed. She started slowly, drawing her first four games. And then she lost in the fifth round.

And yet, on Wednesday night at Pegeia, Cyprus, it was R. Vaishali who had the last smile. She staged a coup at the Women's Candidates chess tournament. She won the event, becoming the first Indian woman to do it.

She has qualified to play the World title match. Only one Indian has been there before: Koneru Humpy, one of the strongest players of all time in women's chess.

Vaishali will play the World title match against China's Ju Wenjun, which will be held later this year. She may start that event as the underdog, too. But Ju is unlikely to take her lightly.

Vaishali has the ability to raise her game at the right time. Like she did in Cyprus. After losing in the fifth round to Zhu Jiner, the top seed, she bounced back admirably, winning her next two rounds to get her campaign back on track.

Going into the last three rounds, she had a comfortable lead of one point, but she lost to her nemesis Zhu again, in the 12th round (the Candidates is an eight-player round-robin tournament). She drew the penultimate round to share the lead with Bibisara Assaubayeva. She showed her class in the final round encounter against Katerya Lagno to write her own name in history books.

The Candidates is only the latest in the series of some stunning victories for Vaishali. She has won the Grand Swiss twice, thus earning the qualification for the Candidates in successive editions.

She is one of the few women to get the Grandmaster title and was part of the Olympiad-winning team. Till a few years ago though, she was overshadowed by her prodigious younger brother R. Praggnanandhaa.

She once told this correspondent how bad she felt when she first lost to him when he was a little boy. She considers it lucky she has such a strong player at home.

"And Vaishali can get even better," Grandmaster Pravin Thipsay tells *The Hindu*. "I believe she could beat Ju Wenjun."

Bowlers' day out as RCB coasts to victory against a listless LSG

The pace trio of Bhuvneshwar, Hazlewood and Rasikh comes up with a superlative effort to set up its fourth win of the season; Kohli comes in as an Impact Player, makes the top score; visiting team's skipper Pant struggles in his brief stay

IPL-19

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

Royal Challengers Bengaluru sauntered to its fourth victory in five matches this IPL season, beating Lucknow Super Giants by five wickets at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium here on Wednesday.

Chasing a modest 147, RCB got home with nearly five overs to spare to go top of the table.

Virat Kohli, who came in as an Impact Player, scored the most (49, 34b, 6x4, 1x6), but it was captain Rajat Patidar's two breathtaking sixes off Mohammed Shami - over long-on and above fine-leg - that will remain long in memory.

By T20 standards, much of the contest was slow-burn. The hitting was not manic, the atmosphere not so frenzied, and the 29,000 odd fans did not have as many moments as they usually would to let out the gasps and whoops.

But even that will not help LSG from feeling tarred and feathered, as it came up with another abject batting effort.

It will also feel knackered, for Rishabh Pant, hit on his left elbow by Josh Hazlewood while batting, did not come out to keep.

After Patidar asked the visitors to bat, LSG started gingerly, scoring just 16 runs from the first 17 balls. When Mitchell Marsh hit the last delivery of the third over - from Bhuvneshwar Kumar - onto the roof over square-leg, it was expected to have an unshackling effect.

On a roll: Rasikh's incisive spell made Kohli's job easy. K. MURALI KUMAR

What followed was the exact opposite. Aiden Markram was out in bizarre fashion, caught at cover off a full-toss down the leg-side by Rasikh Salam. Pant retired hurt off the third ball he faced, and Nicholas Pooran's wretched run continued (1, 7b) as the excellent Hazlewood (4-0-20-1) forced him to play on.

Ayush Badoni (38, 24b, 4x4, 1x6) and Marsh (40, 32b, 3x4, 2x6) combined for 36 runs but run-rate was unsatisfactory. Badoni was involved in another mini rescue-act with Mukul Choudhury (39, 28b, 3x4, 2x6), but a sharp catch from wicket-keeper Jitesh Sharma ended the former's stint.

At 118 for five, Pant came out to bat, with his elbow strapped. But his stay was short-lived, caught as he was by a diving Phil Salt at the square-leg boundary. That was Pant's last act on the field, and he found little joy in the dressing room too.

Next assignment

RCB: April 18 vs. **DC**
Bengaluru, 3.30 p.m.

LSG: April 19 vs. **PBKS**
New Chandigarh, 7.30 p.m.

SCOREBOARD

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS
Mitchell Marsh b Krunal 40 *(32b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Aiden Markram c Padikkal b Rasikh 12 *(8b, 1x6)*, Rishabh Pant c Salt b Bhuvneshwar 1 *(6b)*, Nicholas Pooran b Hazlewood 1 *(7b)*, Ayush Badoni c Jitesh b Rasikh 38 *(24b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Abdul Samad c Patidar b Krunal 0 *(2b)*, Mukul Choudhary b Rasikh 39 *(28b, 3x4, 2x6)*, George Linde **(Impact Player for Badoni)** c David b Bhuvneshwar 7 *(7b, 1x4)*, Mohammed Shami b Bhuvneshwar 0 *(1b)*, Avesh Khan b Rasikh 1 *(2b)*, Digvesh Rathi (not out) 0 *(3b)*; Extras (b-1, lb-2, w-4): 7; Total (in 20 overs): 146.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-32 (Markram, 3.6 overs), 2-35 (Pooran, 6.1), 3-71 (Marsh, 9.5), 4-83 (Samad, 11.2), 5-118 (Badoni, 15.5), 6-124 (Pant, 16.5), 7-137 (Linde, 18.3), 8-137 (Shami, 18.4), 9-145 (Mukul, 19.2).

RCB BOWLING
Bhuvneshwar 4-0-27-3, Hazlewood 4-0-20-1, Rasikh 4-0-24-4, Krunal 4-0-38-2, Suyash 4-0-34-0.

ROYAL CHALLENGERS
Phil Salt b Prince 7 *(8b, 1x4)*, Virat Kohli **(Impact Player for Suyash)** c Pooran b Avesh 49 *(34b, 6x4, 1x6)*, Devdutt Padikkal c (sub) Himmat b Avesh 10 *(11b, 1x4)*, Rajat Patidar c Digvesh b Prince 27 *(13b, 1x4, 3x6)*, Jitesh Sharma c Mukul b Prince 23 *(9b, 2x4, 2x6)*, Tim David (not out) 14 *(8b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Romario Shepherd (not out) 14 *(8b, 1x4, 1x6)*; Extras (lb-4, w-1): 5; Total (for five wkts. in 15.1 overs): 149.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-9 (Salt, 1.4), 2-66 (Padikkal, 7.2), 3-86 (Kohli, 10.1), 4-121 (Patidar, 12.2), 5-122 (Jitesh, 12.4).

SUPER GIANTS BOWLING
Shami 3-0-30-0, Prince 3-0-32-3, Digvesh 4-0-51-0, Avesh 4-0-23-2, Linde 1.1-0-9-0.

Toss: RCB. **PoM:** Hazlewood.
RCB won by five wickets with 29 balls remaining.

Rohit's injury in focus for desperate MI

Shayan Acharya
MUMBAI

It has been a forgettable outing for Mumbai Indians so far, with just two points from four games. Adding to its woes, MI sweats over Rohit Sharma's fitness for the must-win IPL match against Punjab Kings at the Wankhede Stadium on Thursday.

Rohit had hobbled off after injuring his hamstring during the previous game against Royal Challengers Bengaluru and has since skipped practice, with the franchise maintaining that the "medical team is assessing" him. Rohit did some light, gingerly jogging on the eve of the game after skipping earlier training sessions. Later, he also spent some time in the nets, facing net bowlers.

A late call is expected, but if he eventually misses out, it will further dent a top-order that has lacked consistency. Rohit's ability to anchor and accelerate has often set the tone, and his absence would only deepen Mumbai's early-season struggles.

Big question: MI sweats over Rohit's fitness as the former champion looks to get its campaign back on track. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Today's match

MUMBAI INDIANS vs. PUNJAB KINGS

Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: **34**
MI 17 | PBKS 17

PREVIOUS MEETING
PBKS won by five wickets, 2025

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 & JIOHOTSTAR

Batting woes

MI has found the going tough, with its star-studded batting line-up failing to click collectively. Starts have not been converted, and partnerships have been hard to build.

On the eve of the game, Naman Dhir downplayed concerns over the form of Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma. While Suryakumar has scored 106 runs, Tilak has managed just 35 so far, though the team remains confident of a turnaround in fortunes.

The bowling unit, too, has been far from impressive. Jasprit Bumrah is yet to pick up a wicket despite being economical, while Trent Boult and Hardik Pandya have lacked consistency at key moments, especially in the death overs.

Punjab Kings, led by Shreyas Iyer, appears more settled. Strong PowerPlay returns from Prabhsimran Singh and Priyansh Arya, along with middle-order stability, give the side the edge heading into the contest.

For Mumbai, another defeat could deepen a crisis in a season already threatening to drift away early, leaving little margin for recovery in a tightly contested league.

Noor's technical refinement does the job

Tarun Shastry
CHENNAI

Chennai Super Kings turned Tuesday into another day of revival. The rhythm continued; so did the roars. A commanding 32-run victory over Kolkata Knight Riders didn't just help Super Kings join the cluster of teams with four points, but also rekindled the 'Fortress Chepauk' discussion.

At the heart of this resurgence was a reinvigorated spin attack, led by left-arm wrist-spinner Noor Ahmad, whose performance reflected both technical refinement and tactical maturity.

"There was a bit more help from the surface today [Tuesday]," explained CSK's assistant bowling coach S. Sriram. "But, more importantly, Noor adapted well. He slowed it down through the air, got more side spin, and, crucially, more drop," Sriram said at the MAC Stadium.

M.S. Dhoni has spent time with the young Afghan and helped him sharpen his leg-break, revealed Sriram. "M.S. had a long chat with him at a practice session, getting his leg breaks to flow. That worked... as the results showed," said Sriram.

An in-game intervention, too, elevated Noor's performance. And it came from the other left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein, whose impact extended beyond his own bowling.

During the strategic timeout, the West Indian shared a key insight with Noor: find that "in-between length."

"Akeal was the one who told Noor about the 'in-between length' he needed to bowl. Once he figured that out, Noor became almost unplayable. I was part of that conversation and it really became a strategic break. Noor and Akeal complement each other very well. There is camaraderie between them and a lot of exchange of information too".

Tactical nous: The KKR batters struggled once Noor found his length and speed. R. RAGU

Points table

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Royal Challengers	5	4	1	0	8	1.503
Rajasthan Royals	5	4	1	0	8	0.889
Punjab Kings	4	3	0	1	7	0.720
Sunrisers Hyderabad	5	2	3	0	4	0.576
Delhi Capitals	4	2	2	0	4	0.322
Gujarat Titans	4	2	2	0	4	-0.029
Lucknow Super Giants	5	2	3	0	4	-0.804
Chennai Super Kings	5	2	3	0	4	-0.846
Mumbai Indians	4	1	3	0	2	-0.772
Kolkata Knight Riders	5	0	4	1	1	-1.383

INBRIEF

Shubhankar goes to the top; Baisoya breaks course record

Shubhankar Sharma, *in pic.*, carded a second consecutive six-under 66 to take a two-shot lead after the second round of the inaugural Boulders Classic in Hyderabad on Wednesday. The 29-year-old moved to the top of the leader-board with a 12-under 132 while overnight leader Vishesh Sharma (65-70) slipped to third at 135. Honey Baisoya broke the course record with an immaculate round of 64 that propelled him from overnight tied 42nd to tied fourth at 136. He broke Vishesh's record of 65 set in the first round.

Infosys ropes in Alcaraz as global brand ambassador

IT services company Infosys on Wednesday announced it has signed up seven-time Grand Slam Champion Carlos Alcaraz as its global brand ambassador. Infosys will work with Alcaraz and his coaching team to develop an AI-powered match analytics and a personalised performance application to aid match preparation and in-game strategy. Beyond the court, the partnership also extends to joint initiatives between Infosys and the Carlos Alcaraz Foundation, to leverage technology to drive social impact, focusing on tech-for-good initiatives.

Real Madrid great Santamaria passes away aged 96

Real Madrid defender Jose Emilio Santamaria, a Uruguayan who won four European Cups as part of the club's golden generation of players from the 1950s and 1960s before becoming coach of Spain, has died at age 96. Santamaria, who joined Real in 1957, helped it win European Cups in 1958, 1959, 1960 and in 1966, playing alongside legends like Alfredo Di Stefano and Ferenc Puskas. He also helped it win six Spanish league titles, among other trophies, during his 337 appearances.

Hockey Jharkhand continues to be women's powerhouse

Hockey Jharkhand continued its dominance at the grassroots level by clinching the 16th Hockey India sub-junior women's National championship, beating host Madhya Pradesh 2-1 at Rajgir, marking a third consecutive title (2024, 2025, 2026) and reinforcing its status as one of the strongest junior setups in the country. The State has secured an impressive 34 medals in women's competitions alone, including 10 gold, 11 silver and 13 bronze medals. Jharkhand's junior women's team has amassed 14 medals (five gold, five silver, four bronze), while the sub-junior women's team has claimed 12 (four gold, five silver, three bronze), including the recent three-peat.

Back trouble ends Olympic champ Axelsen's career

Denmark's double Olympic badminton champion Viktor Axelsen announced his retirement at 32 on Wednesday, saying back problems meant he could no longer "compete and train at the highest level". Axelsen, who won gold at the Tokyo Games in 2021 and in Paris in 2024, had back surgery in April last year and said he had not managed to overcome his physical issues. Axelsen retires as one of the most decorated players in history, having also won two World titles and a bronze at the 2016 Rio Olympics. He spent more than 100 consecutive weeks at the top of the men's singles world rankings, an achievement surpassed only by Malaysian great Lee Chong-wei.

Atletico Madrid baulks Barcelona's riposte to reach the semifinals

Yamal, Torres fire the visitor level before Lookman settles the issue for the Madrid side; a Dembele double helps PSG end Liverpool's campaign

Pivotal: Lookman bundles in Atletico's only goal of the night to send his team through past Barcelona, while Dembele scores for PSG to complete Liverpool's rout. AFP, AP

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Agence France-Presse
MADRID

Atletico Madrid sent 10-man Barcelona crashing out of the Champions League and reached the final four with a 3-2 aggregate victory despite Tuesday's 2-1 quarter-final second leg defeat.

Over at Anfield, Ousmane Dembele's double guided Paris Saint-Germain into the semifinals as a 2-0 win over Liverpool completed a 4-0 aggregate win for the holder.

Lamine Yamal and Ferran Torres fired Barca ahead inside 24 minutes but Ademola Lookman's strike gave Atletico the edge in the gripping all-Spanish tie once again after its 2-0 win in the first leg.

Diego Simeone's side returned to the semifinals for the first time since 2017 by holding on against the La Liga champion in a compelling and bloody battle.

Barcelona defender Eric Garcia was sent off for bringing down Alexander Sorloth as he ran in on goal in the final stages, hampering its chances of finding a third goal to force extra-time.

Atletico has never won the competition and lost the 2014 and 2016 finals with Simeone at the helm.

"(We're) very happy, knocking out a great Barca side. We had a great game away... it was really hard for us at the start (of this one), but the team knew how to get back on its feet," Atletico midfielder Koke told Movistar.

Barcelona last won the Champions League in 2015 and its wait for a sixth crown continues.

Fiery atmosphere

Goalkeeper Juan Musso tipped a Yamal effort around his post after just 32 seconds, with Barca roaring out of the blocks in a fiery atmosphere at the Metropolitano stadium.

The teenage winger fired the visitors ahead after just four minutes when he harried Clement Lenglet into giving the ball away.

Torres nudged it back to Yamal who slipped a low shot through Musso's legs to hush the home fans and ignite Barca's attempted comeback bid.

Barcelona doubled its lead in the 24th minute to level the tie on aggregate when Torres left Lenglet trailing, reached Olmo's pass and fired across Musso into the top corner.

Fermin Lopez could have notched Barca's third but Musso clawed out his header and left the midfielder bleeding after his boot caught the Spaniard in the face.

Atletico pulled its way back into the game in the 31st minute after Barca switched off defensively for the first time.

Marcos Llorente charged in down the right behind the Catalans' high defensive line and crossed for Lookman to convert.

Liverpool will end the campaign trophyless after being kept at arm's reach by a PSG side that did not need to be at its brilliant best to reach a third consecutive semifinal.

Defeat means there will be no glorious goodbye for Mohamed Salah after nine memorable years on Merseyside.

PSG had plenty of chances to put the tie to bed in the Parc des Princes last week and was profligate once more in the first half.

Dembele finally killed the tie off 18 minutes from time when he cut onto his left foot and curled into the bottom corner from outside the box.

The French international then inflicted the final blow with a cool finish from Bradley Barcola's cross in stoppage time.

The results (quarterfinals, second leg): Atletico Madrid 1 (Lookman 31) lost to Barcelona 2 (Yamal 4, Torres 24) (Atletico advances 3-2 on aggregate).

Liverpool 0 lost to PSG 2 (Dembele 72, 90+1) (PSG advances 4-0 on aggregate).

A buzzing EBFC welcomes strong Bengaluru FC

ISL

Amitabha Das Sharma
KOLKATA

East Bengal FC will look to continue its winning momentum when it hosts a strong Bengaluru FC in an ISL-12 fixture at the Salt Lake Stadium on Thursday.

EBFC heads into the contest high on confidence after a 3-1 away win over Chennaiyin FC.

The Kolkata giant will aim to build on that performance and secure another positive result at home to bolster its title chances.

Meanwhile, Bengaluru FC will be eager to bounce back after losing to Kerala Blasters FC in its previous outing.

That loss halted its recent progress, and the team will now target crucial points to get back in the championship race.

Hard at work: Bengaluru FC players at a training session ahead of the EB clash. X@BENGALURUFC

Both sides are currently level on 14 points, but East Bengal holds a slight edge in fourth place due to a superior goal difference.

BFC, having played one match more (eight compared to EBFC's seven), faces added pressure to deliver in this encounter.

A major boost for BFC comes from the availability of Argentine playmaker Braian Sanchez, whose suspension was revoked after the All India Football Federation disciplinary committee downgraded his red card (that he collected against Blasters) to a yellow.

His presence could prove crucial in midfield as Bengaluru looks to go full steam for the maximum quota of points.

NorthEast snatches a draw against Kerala Blasters

P.K. Ajith Kumar
KOCHI

After that morale-boosting victory in Bengaluru, Kerala Blasters was just two minutes of normal time away from another win, which would have been the first at home this season. But, that was not to be, as NorthEast United struck in the dying minutes to make it 1-1.

It was a lively match in which the two teams that have struggled in the ISL fought bitterly and created plenty of chances, but only two of them turned into goals. And one of those was an own goal.

NorthEast's Andy Rodriguez was credited with that goal which put the host ahead with just four minutes remaining in the opening half. Fallou Ndiaye played the key role in the making of that goal, though.

Following a free-kick, Karim Benarif stormed into the box and found Ndiaye, who first came up with a header and then a bicycle kick. And the ball travelled to Parthib Gogoi and then the unfortunate Rodriguez.

The Blasters continued to press hard, and even came close to increasing the lead, but never managed to. They, however, looked like claiming another three points until substitute Lalrinzuala Lalbiaknia struck for the visiting side at the death.

The Blasters' goalkeeper Arsh Shaikh had come off his post, but failed to clear the danger from Robin Yadav, another substitute. Lalbiaknia ensured the rebound would be the equaliser. NorthEast now has seven points, and Blasters five.

The result: Kerala Blasters 1 (Andy Rodriguez 41-og) 1 drew with NorthEast United 1 (Lalrinzuala Lalbiaknia 88).

LIVE TELECAST

ISL: Sony Sports Ten 2 & FanCode, 7.30 p.m.

IPL: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.

Europa League: Sony Sports Ten 1, 2, 5 & LIV, 10.15 p.m. & 12.30 a.m. (Friday)

Recognising excellence

Proud moment: Karnataka Badminton Association member N.C. Sridhar, president Kumar Bangarappa, Ayush Shetty and his parents at a felicitation function hosted on Wednesday. Ayush was awarded a cheque of ₹1 lakh for claiming silver at the Badminton Asia Championship. SUDHAKARA JAIN

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Shantinagar wins title

Shantinagar defeated Rajajinagar 6-3 in the final to emerge as the KSFA-Vaishnavi Chief Minister's Cup football tournament champion here on Wednesday. The winner took home a purse of ₹2 lakh, while the runner-up got ₹1 lakh.

The results: Final: Shantinagar 6 (Magesh 5, 27, Vijay 11, Alex Ajay 37, Roshan Singh 70, Chris Anthony 88) bt Rajajinagar 3 (Kaviarasan 25, Monish Kumar 60, 90+3).

With the cup: The victorious Shantinagar team. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Abhishek and Axar added to NADA's RTP

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

India's T20 World Cup-winning stars Abhishek Sharma and Axar Patel were noticeable additions to the National Anti-Doping Agency's (NADA) Registered Testing Poolfor the second quarter of the ongoing year.

The two have replaced Smriti Mandhana and Shreyas Iyer in the latest list and will be required to share their whereabouts with NADA and be available for testing within a specified window every day.